Stranded with Love

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Stranded with Love

by MadValentine

Summary

Merfolk are taught to not go on land and interact with humans because to mers, humans equal danger. Little Will was fine with those rules, but he can't help his curiosity when he spots a human boy sitting on the beach sketching.

Notes

Hey guys I know I'm still working on The Other One and that one is close to being done and it was like maybe three weeks ago when I started working on this. I mentioned it on the latest update of The Other One. I'm focusing on that fic and I just started writing this one out and I was debating on posting it but I thought "Why not?"

I'm curious to see the feedback I get on it. I tried doing research on the Italian phrases being used in here (not just relying on Google Translate 😅😅😅) but if I'm wrong on some phrases please share with me and I'll change it.

Setting wise, this is set in modern times. I'm still working on things here and there and silly me hasn't even gotten a specific date set for this fic 😅😅😅 this story starts from Hannibal and Will meeting at a young age to when they become like in their 20s but I want to try and keep things as modern as I can relate to but don't worry I'll think of a specific time period. When they get to their 20s the story will be set in 2015 since it goes with the last season.

Like I mentioned you're definitely gonna get a Little Mermaid vibe with this but it's still fairly different but you'll see. This idea was stemmed from The Little Mermaid and Luca (which I'm OBSESSED with and I don't know those two Disney movies just really inspired me)

The name was inspired by the video game Mads is in Death Stranding (which I have played and LOVE so much). The character Bridget Strand writes on a photograph of her son's wedding photo "Be stranded with love" ergo that's where the title for this story came from (not gonna give spoilers but it is a GOOD game 🥰🥲 favorite character is Cliff Unger whom Mads portrayed 😌)

I want to write some more little Abigail but I've yet to come up with another story idea to involve little Abigail but I'm trying to come up with something I promise 🙏 I love writing little Abigail she's so cute 🥺🥺🥺

Either way, I hope you all enjoy this new story 💙💙💙💙💙💙

Uno

Throughout the entire world, there have been stories going around of creatures that seem to stem from the imagination of someone else. Countless people would not dare to believe in the possibility of enormous squids or creatures who are half-human-half-fish. Many would refuse to believe in such a thing since it sounded completely nonsensical.

There was no way any of these tales could be true, right?

The curious fish always gets caught was a lesson that had been instilled in the minds of all mer children. Children were curious in general, so it made sense that their parents knocked some sense into them. Some mer had a bad experience going near the surface or knew someone who did. If you were a lucky fish, you did not have the best experience or lose someone from one. The main point was that going to the surface meant being exposed to humans and humans meant danger to the merfolk.

Eight-year-old Will could still recall all the times his own mother warned him to not leave the safety of Primavera and if he did, never go near the surface. *"Humans are dangerous Will and when they see you they're going to fish you on a hook!"* His mother never failed to remind him about the deadly fishing hooks and harpoons that humans used while they fished on their little boats. Will knew his father did not dare say a word since his wife was already teaching their son what he needed to know.

Mers were blessed when they had no bad experience with humans and the people they loved did not either. Will would have never anticipated the same until his mother's warnings became mere memories to his ears. His father just looking proudly at his mother was a simple memory too. A life he once knew was all a bunch of memories to him now.

"My mom is so gonna kill me!" A silver tailed mer boy, Jimmy, whisper-shouted as if his dear mother was hiding somewhere and spying on him.

A violet tailed mer girl, Beverly, with curly locks gently shoved Jimmy. "She's not here, Jimmy. Besides, no one is gonna tell her."

"My parents would be mad too." Brian, a seafoam-colored tailed mer boy, stuck to Jimmy's side. Beverly's annoyed sigh was a good enough signal that she was having enough of their complaining.

"If you annoy the barnacles out of Beverly, she might punch you too." A scarlet tailed mer girl, Alana, stated with an amused expression.

Everyone's talking fell on deaf ears as Will's attention was on the area they were near. They were a long way from Primavera, the merfolk kingdom they were from. It had been Beverly's

idea to go check out a massive kelp forest where she found a bunch of sea turtles nearby. One of Beverly's favorite things was watching all types of sea creatures. She was still trying to look for some sea lions, but she had been unsuccessful for now.

Will looked forward and knew that if he swam a bit farther he would reach towards a shore. When there was a shore, there were humans.

"And you don't want to mess with humans, Will! They're foul, selfish creatures. They do enough by polluting our water, but I've heard some hunt sea monsters too! If they found you or any other mer, nothing good would happen!" Will could hear his mother's warnings ringing in his head once more. It was like she was his inner voice that told him not do something.

Could it be all that bad?

"Your parents were right, Will. It's a sad fact, but they're gone because of humans. There's a reason why we tell young mers this. There's a reason why we forbid anyone from interacting with humans." It was Jack this time and most times, he stated the same exact warnings his mother told him long ago.

"SEA TURTLE!" Beverly exclaimed in excitement and dived deep into the kelp forest. Other fish swam away when seeing Brian and Jimmy follow Beverly.

Alana was about to chase after them when she noticed at the corner of her eye that Will was looking elsewhere. "Hey," she called out to him, gaining his attention. With a big grin, she asked, "don't you want to go see some sea turtles?"

Will chuckled softly and was about to answer with a yes when he heard something. He turned his head back to where he was looking. It was coming from the shore. It sounded like a little girl squealing. For a moment, it reminded him of the smaller mer children back at Primavera. He supposed it must have been a human child.

Alana must have mistaken Will's attention towards the human as fear. "It's okay, Will, they won't get us." When Will turned to her and looked into her blue eyes, he saw sorrow. He knew exactly what she was thinking without her having to say it. "They won't catch us in the kelp forest."

She wants me to feel safe, Will thought knowing Alana was just trying to be a protective friend. She would be shocked to know what he was really thinking. He wondered what it looked like up there. How different was it from being under the sea? You could only find about by seeing for yourself.

"I know, um...I think I'm gonna stay out here, Alana." Will said with a convincing smile. His curiosity was too busy eating up at him. "I'll just wait out here."

Alana was quiet for a moment, studying her friend's face. She raised an eyebrow. "Are you sure?"

Will knew he was certain. If he decided to listen to his heart, he would rather his friends not get involved in his foolishness. "Yeah, I-I promise."

Without pestering him any further, Alana told him they'd be right back before heading into the kelp forest with her other friends. While his friends were occupied, Will turned back towards the direction of the shore. His friends were not there to stop him if he decided to do it.

Will had been fine abiding by the rules of not interacting with humans. Once upon a time, he had gotten angry at the mention of humans since he knew they had been responsible for his parents' demise. He had been present when a few guards reported them dead with fish hooks and harpoon wounds which could only be caused by humans.

Young Will was fine with despising humans. It was when he saw more of their items that the curiosity in the back of his mind began to spark. In Primavera, there was an older woman named Crazy Katherine the Hag. She carried a copious amount of human items and ran a shop where she sold them to any mer who wanted them. King Molson had the old mermaid humiliated when he visited her stand and told her that human objects were useless.

Some mers feared that the youngsters would be too curious and when they saw the human items they'd be persuaded to head to the surface. Katherine wanted to show off the unique human items and said that everyone just fears the unknown. She also did not mind sharing a few scary stories regarding humans and mers. Will had been heading home when he spotted something interesting.

It was a little object that looked like a fish frozen. The object was not cold and the little fish was colorful and hard as if it was not alive. There was a tiny hook attached to its mouth and a little circle where its tail would have been. There was a box of twenty inside.

"Those are called fishing lures." Will had flinched when he heard Katherine's voice suddenly. She was standing right in front of him. "The humans use them to catch fish. They're pretty, aren't they?"

Will held the fishing lure he was holding , still shocked that it looked like a little fish . "It isn't made of a real fish?"

Katherine shook her head. "It'd be useless if it was a real fish. Humans make it out of this hard substance called plastic."

"Plas-tick?" Will repeated.

"Will! Will, don't play with that stuff! It's time to go home." It was another familiar female voice. Will looked to see Bella with a concerned look as she gave Katherine the fishing lure back and dragged him away.

It had been a week ago and he would be lying if he said he did not stare at Katherine's little booth with her human objects. Will did not want to get caught though. The fishing lures were pretty and he was a bit curious knowing humans invented it. He wondered what else could possibly be up there.

Maybe he could have just a little look? He would swim back down and besides, no human could catch a swimming mer. Mers were fast swimmers. He would not be caught.

Will turned his head one last time to make sure his friends were still in the kelp forest before swimming away. The further he got from his friends, the faster his heart raced. It felt like it would just jump out of his chest by how fast it was pumping.

He gulped down a lump that had formed in his throat when he spotted the scattered rocks in the ocean. He could see the sand and smaller rocks from the shore. Will stayed near one big rock in case he needed to hide. He was debating to go a little further when he saw something black fall into the ocean. It was a thin black stick that was slowly falling down.

Curiously, Will took the black stick and examined it. What was this object called? What could it do?

Will looked up and got a tiny bit closer. Just a few feet away was a small human. He gasped when he realized that this the closest he's ever been near one. It had light blonde hair that reached its ears. The human was also dressed in some grey colored thing. It was so weird looking at a human. It had no tale and no scales. It was wearing something. Will guessed the human child was a boy.

The mer boy also noticed the human was holding something over its lap. It was this wide white thing and he had grabbed a black stick that was identical to the one Will was holding in his hands.

Did the stick belong to the human?

Instead of swimming away or forward, Will kept his cerulean eyes on the human. One thing he noticed was the human's furrowed forehead and downcast gaze. It kind of reminded Will of when he was told about his parents. He knew there was no way of seeing what his face looked like, but he could feel his face morph into a different expression when he heard his parents were never coming home.

Jack and Bella were there to hold and soothe him. Will wondered if there was anyone there for this human.

Will had been too lost in his thoughts to notice that deep maroon eyes that belonged to the human boy were staring at him. Will made eye contact with the human and gasped.

He had been seen by a human. The human was looking back at him with surprise. Will felt frozen being under the gaze of those eyes.

Will did not get the chance to react because he felt like he was being dragged down underwater. He would have struggled, but his eyes were glued to those maroon ones.

"WILL, WHAT WERE YOU THINKING?!"

"That was a human! I don't know if it saw you but...oh my pearls, oh my pearls."

"Will, you can never do that again! If you had gone any further up, things could have ended badly!"

"You have to promise to never do that again, Will."

Will knew his friends were there scolding him. They were the exact same words his parents would have told them if they had caught him. He knew the four of them were just being protective, but his eyes had never left the surface.

Maroon eyes was all he could think of.

Due

Will was exiting his home when he spotted Alana nearby a few coral where she was gathering some sea cucumbers. Will swam over to his friend. It had just been yesterday when his friends caught him to close to the shore. When he opened or closed his eyes all he could see was maroon.

Alana did not look pleased when he swam over to her. Will knew she was still angry that he had gotten himself into possible danger. If there was anyone who had never cross that curious boundary it was Alana. She definitely followed authority and tried to remind everyone else of what was right or wrong. It made sense to why Alana would stay mad the longest.

"What are you up to?" Alana asked, not wanting yesterday's situation brought up. She examined two sea cucumbers in her hand to not have to look at her friend.

Will frowned. "I know you're not happy about yesterday. No one is. I'm fine though, look at-"

Alana threw the sea cucumbers into her basket and stared at Will with fury in her eyes. "What if you weren't?! What if that human had a weapon? What if he pulled you up and strangled you? What if- what if he had a net to trap you? You wouldn't be fine, Will!" Her angered tone caused bluebanded goby to swim away in haste.

Will looked around real quick and was relieved to see no grownups had noticed Alana's outburst. Any mers that were outside were engrossed in their own daily lives to care about what two young mers were discussing.

The cerulean eyed mer faced his friend and placed a hand on her shoulder. Alana kept her eyes down. "I know you were worried about me and you don't need to remind me about how dangerous it is, Alana."

It was a few moments before Alana found the nerve to look at her friend. She had been mad but that was because she was worried and wanted nothing bad to happen to her friend. She was genuinely concerned.

"I know you know." Alana finally spoke. She could never stay mad at Will for too long. "We don't want you to get in trouble with Jack and Bella so we agreed to keep it between us all."

Will smiled softly when he heard that. He had worried Jack and Bella would lecture him this morning, but it seemed like he would not have to endure one. He deeply appreciated his friends for not ratting him out.

"Thanks...that means a lot to me." Will responded. *They don't need to worry about me,* he thought. "They have enough to worry about."

"Your safety is their main priority too, Will." Alana stated. Since what happend was water under the bridge, she changed the subject. "Where are you off to?"

Will knew he would have to come up with some lie in case someone asked. "I wanted to go gather some shells to make a necklace."

"Ooh!" Alana's interest piqued. She was excited to hear about Will's idea. "Who's the necklace for?"

"I was gonna make one for Bella...she's not my mother, but I still appreciate her." It was all a lie, but he could always obtain shells. Alana did not have to know of the truth and he could show her the shells he found too it she was curious later.

Alana smiled. "That's sweet, Will. Even though you're not her son, she sees you as one and loves you too as if you were." She eyeballed the basket of sea cucumbers. "My mom is having me do chores all day."

Will hated chores too, but he never minded them. "That sucks." He wondered what Beverly, Jimmy and Brian were up to today. There was no way Jimmy and Brian were heading back to the kelp forest. They'd never go by themselves. Their parents probably were not thrilled to hear that they had gone in the first place. "Well, I'll see you later, Alana. Tell your mom I said hi."

"I will!" Alana waved as her friend swam away. She turned to the basket and did not turn to watch Will leave.

🐚 ***Hannigram*** 🐚

Will smiled when he saw the kelp forest. He doubted Beverly was there, but no one would ever know. Once he spotted two sea turtles make their way into the kelp forest, the young mer continued swimming in the direction of the shore. He had just been there yesterday so he would recognize it like it was just a moment ago that he was there.

The big rocks that were scattered everywhere.

Will recognized he was in the exact area that the human was sitting at yesterday. He hid behind a large rock and eyed the spot. This time, the human could not be found. Will had showed up early on purpose. He had no plans on making contact with the human, but watching him from afar was a harmless idea that he could entertain.

Minutes had gone by when something black caught his eyes. It was the little black stick. It was stuck between some coral. Will swam towards it and gently placed his hand between the coral and snatched the stick without injuring himself. Without realizing it, Will went up the

surface as he examined the little stick. It was a moment later when he saw someone staring back at him.

Maroon eyes.

Will gasped and was about to submerge into water when the human spoke. "Wait! I'm not going to hurt you." Will had emerged most of his body back in the water, but he stayed.

The human had just arrived. Once he saw that Will was not going anywhere, he took his seat on the sand. In his hands was the big white square he had in his hands. In his other hand was a little pouch. He opened it and took out a little black stick like the one Will was holding.

"You're obviously not human, I've concluded." The human moved the little stick on the white square. Will tried to watch from where he was. "I swear I will not harm you. I just have my sketchpad and charcoal pencils."

Will looked down at the little stick he was holding. A charcoal pencil?

"Char-kol." Will muttered although it could not be heard much since most of his face was submerged underwater.

The human raised an eyebrow. "Hmm?" He stopped moving the charcoal pencil around and gave his undying attention to Will.

Will swam up a little bit closer to the human. He sensed that he was not going to try to do something or so he hoped. "Char-kol."

"*Charcoal*." The human repeated and eyed the charcoal pencil in Will's hands. "I dropped that one yesterday in the water. It appears that it has been saved."

Will glanced down at the pencil and then back at the human. He saw he had continued moving the other little stick on the white square. "What...what are you doing?"

"Sketching. It's to capture a sight with paper and a type of drawing tool. I believe charcoal is best used to sketch." The human explained matter-of-factly. He did not seem annoyed at all, maybe a bit pleased to teach the young mer a bit.

Will got a bit closer to see what the human was *sketching.* It looked exactly like the big rock he had hidden behind. There were extra details since the human did not forget to add the ocean and its small waves.

"How...it looks the same!" Will exclaimed in shock, but thrilled to see how well the human had sketched.

The human gazed down so the mer could not see his small blush. "Practice, my dear sea friend." The human added a few more touches to his sketch when he stopped. He placed his charcoal pencil down and extended his right hand. "I'm Hannibal. Hannibal Lecter."

Hannibal. It was a unique name he has never heard before. "Hann-i-bal." Hannibal nodded. Will liked the name. "I'm Will..." He was still confused as to why Hannibal's hand was

towards him. "What's *that* for?"

Hannibal barely realized Will had not shaken his hand. He would have called that rude until he remembered his friend was not human. "Foolish of me, my apologies. When humans meet, we shake hands and introduce ourselves."

"Oh." Will understood. He did as Hannibal did and extended his hand. Once their hands were in each other's, Will did as instructed and shook the human's hand.

"Just like that." Hannibal smiled proudly. Will felt his skin heat up when hearing he had done well with a human greeting. Hannibal was the one to let go first. "Not that I don't welcome your company, but what brings you here?"

Will started fiddling with the charcoal pencil in his hands. "I...I was curious. I've never seen a human or been to the surface..."

"Curiosity is good for the soul." Hannibal randomly muttered. He went back to his sketching. "I'm assuming it's forbidden for your kind to do anything that would involve human interactions?" Will nodded. Hannibal was young, but not stupid. He had read a bunch of books and he was familiar with the myths of the merfolk. Of course no one would know about them. If humans did it would only end in harm towards the innocent creatures.

"So you're just here cause you were curious." Hannibal stated, his focus on his sketching. It was brave of Will to let his curiosity get the better of him. If he had come across a bad human, it would have not ended well for him.

Will thought back on the fishing lures he saw. "I've never been really curious before. I saw some fishing lures and I...I just wondered what else the human world contained."

Hannibal stopped sketching. Had he heard that right? "Your interest stemmed from fishing lures?" Will smiled shyly and nodded in reply. "Do you have them?"

Will shook his head. "No, Bella - *my caretakers* wouldn't appreciate it." Jack and Bella would be enraged to see he had a human item in his possession. "An old mermaid collects a bunch of human stuff. She had a whole box of fishing lures!"

Hannibal chuckled lightly from hearing the excitement in Will's voice. "I can always bring you some fishing lures."

Will touched his lips and his eyes widened. Hannibal was going to bring him some human items? "I-I don't know what to say..." He was speechless by how this day was turning.

Hannibal grinned. "Just say thank you when I bring them," he replied.

"I will..." Will was excited to see the types of fishing lures Hannibal would bring. He decided to look back at the sketching. "Have you sketched anything else?"

Hannibal stopped his sketching and turned the white square over and there were a few sketches Will could see. The first one he saw was a human female standing with sorrowful eyes. The next one Hannibal showed him looked like the ocean but there was a boat (which

Will knew of since young mers were warned about them). The last one Hannibal showed was one of a group of human objects Will had never seen before.

"Oh, this one isn't done." Hannibal instantly brought the other sketches back until he got to his most recent one. Will noticed how quick Hannibal changed the sketches. Did he not want someone to see it?

Hannibal was about to continue sketching when he looked at his right wrist. Will saw there was something wrapped around his wrist. Hannibal frowned at Will. "I must leave, Will. My mother is waiting for me."

Will understood. Even though Hannibal had to leave, he still had a great time. "I understand, Hannibal."

"Tomorrow, I'll be attending an opera with my mother, but the next day I'll be back, my sea friend." Hannibal forgot that Will had no clue what an opera was.

"Op-pera?"

Hannibal knew he was going to have to teach his new friend a few things. "I'll tell you about at a different time. I'll see you soon, Will. Until we meet again."

"Until we meet again, Hannibal..." Will copied Hannibal's words before smiling at the human and slowly swimming away. He stopped to watch his human friend leave.

He could not believe it.

He had a *human friend*.

Tre

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Politics was something that he was told not to concern himself with since he was just a young mer. Although could ignore it now, it would be vital for him to be aware when he got older. This is what his parents, Jack and Bella told him. He was still so young and could do nothing, so there was no point in keeping in the know of things he had no control over.

Still, Will could not completely ignore the politics in Primavera. King Molson and his family had been the royals for centuries of Primavera and it would just continue down the line. Molson happened to be a fair king. Will had never heard anyone say anything bad about the king. If there was something someone did not like about him everyone would have heard of it by now.

However, just because they liked the king did not mean they were fond of the heir. Molson only had two children, Prince Mason and Princess Margot. Mason would inherit the throne once he was of age. Mason was about his age and he's already heard so many things people disliked about him.

"That selfish brat is to be our future king?"

" He's so rude! Did you see the way he spoke to that child? They're the same age and yet he was so harsh!"

"There's no way he can be Molson's son."

Will had heard all about it. He heard it from grownups and he heard it from kids. Jack and Bella even talked about from time to time. They never had good things to say, but Bella would always remind her husband that they must remember that they were talking about a child.

It was the day after Hannibal was going to the *opera* with his mother when Will was going to head back to the surface to see his friend. Before heading off, he did stumble upon a scene that was happening in the prikabera marketplace.

"I am the prince of Primavera and you will listen to me!" Will stopped in his tracks. He spotted the spoiled son of Molson. Mason, an ivory tailed mer boy, with his head up high was staring down at a young mer boy.

Will was frozen just like the rest of the citizens of Primavera. Was there a way for them to react? Could anyone really do anything? It took Will a moment before he spotted the king not far from his son. He was watching his son, but he made no move to stop him.

Was Molson fine with his son's behavior? Will can see why Mason had so many mers saying not-so nice things about him.

"I-I-I'm sorry, P-prince Mason..." The younger mer boy was shaking. He was likely terrified for his life.

"YOU SHOULD BE!" Mason screamed at the younger mer. Will gasped at the sudden outburst.

"Mason." It was Molson. The heir to Primavera turned away from the mer boy he was screaming at and swam to his father. Will shuddered at the whole scene and swam off without looking back. There was no way he wanted to stay there any longer.

He stopped thinking about the spoiled brat of Primavera and just thought of his human friend Hannibal. When he makes it back to the shore, Hannibal is already there waiting for him. He does not have his charcoal pencils or white square with him this time. Will does notice there is a box sitting in front of Hannibal though.

To get a better look, Will got a bit more out of the water this time. The tip of his tail was touching the water at least.

"Hello Will." Hannibal greeted his friend.

"Hello Hannibal." Will appreciated Hannibal's soft tone. He had just been exposed to a screaming prince so it was a nice change.

Hannibal noticed Will's relief. "What is wrong? You seem grateful for something. Is there something going on?"

Will had not meant for Hannibal to catch on anything, but he guessed there was no harm in telling him. It's not like Hannibal was going to hurt him even though he's known him for less than a week.

"Well...I just left my home and the prince was screaming at some poor mer boy." Will almost wished he had been elsewhere when that happened. It was not a pretty sight to witness.

Hannibal was not expecting that. "Well...that seems rude. Royalty or not, manners and respect applies to everyone." Hannibal focused on the box and he opened it. "Here are the fishing lures I brought."

Will awed at the sight of all the fishing lures. They were all unique with their different colors and shapes. Like Katherine's, Will spotted some that had plastic fishes on them. There were even some simple ones that were just round and were colorful. He found many of them that were the color of Alana and Beverly's tails. A few like his own.

"They're all so pretty." Will gently picked one up that was round and silver like Jimmy's tail. "Where did you get all these?"

Hannibal picked a fish shaped fishing lure. "I uhm...they're in my mother's villa. She doesn't use them. They belonged to someone else."

"What's a villa?" Will stopped examining the silver fishing lure in his hand.

"It's a fancy home. It's my mother's. It is a nice place and it's near the beach so that's a good thing too." Hannibal informed.

Will wondered why Hannibal's mother simply owned the villa or home. His parents both owned his old home. Jack and Bella own their home together. "Why isn't just the family home?"

"Well..." Hannibal was about to begin, but he was hesitant. He continued on, "I live with my uncle Robert and aunt Murasaki in Paris, France. It's a lovely city and I live a great life there. In the summer, I visit my mother here in Italy. I live with her in her villa in Livorno, but we visit Florence all the time. It's a nice change of scenery. Florence is by far my favorite location in the whole world." Hannibal explained as he fiddled with one of the fishing lures.

Will was confused to why Hannibal did not live with his mother. "Why don't you live with your mother?" He knew that there was never a reason to not live with his mother. The only reason he could not was when his parents were confirmed dead.

Hannibal opened his mouth and closed it. After a few moments, he finally spoke. "My mother she...she wishes to indulge in the good memories here. She does not want to be elsewhere. Being in Lithuania breaks her heart and...being in France makes it too real for her."

"Lithuania?" This was the first time Will was hearing the place being mentioned.

Hannibal had a bitter smile on his face. "It is my family's birthplace as it is mine. My uncle wanted to live in France, we're not there because...it's too much." Hannibal's head hung as his voice broke.

Will had not heard Hannibal's father being mentioned either. He was confused, but he could see the watery maroon eyes. Hannibal was devastated about something. "What about your father? Where is he?"

It was as if he had said something wrong. Hannibal stared at him sternly before remaining completely silent. Will figured he was lost in his own thoughts, but he also wondered why it was so hard for Hannibal. Why was it hard to go back home? His mother did not live with him. Why did he not answer about his father?

Maybe he's dead like mine, Will considered. It was never easy to talk about someone who was gone and never coming back. After he learned of his parents' deaths, all he did was isolate himself and sob for days. Will remembered crying himself to sleep. He refused to eat anything because he was just so miserable.

His parents, who he loved and they who had loved him, were gone forever. He could never see them again and they could never either. Jack and Bella comforted him and told him that they were in a better place and would always love him.

Since Hannibal was not saying anything, Will decided too. "My parents are dead. They were off on a little trip and I was at another couple's home until they got back. They didn't show up at all. The king had a search party sent...the guards they...they found them. They were killed by fishing hooks and a harpoon..."

Was it best that he did not have to say goodbye or worst that he never got the chance to?

He would never know. He just knew it hurt that his parents were not here. He knew they were probably mad at him now since he was friends with a human. They would have been so angered if they ever caught him.

Would they continue to say that all humans were bad when Hannibal had only ever been friendly to him?

"I can never see my father again too." Hannibal said softly.

So he's dead too, Will thought. He had gotten the answer to his question.

Will could see the tears on Hannibal's cheeks. He would have wanted to wipe them away, but the moment was interrupted by a female.

"HANNIBAL! HANNIBAL!" Will felt the need to swim back into the water since the voice sounded close and Hannibal was the only human he knew. "Vieni qui per favore!"

Hannibal turned around for a moment before wheeling around to face Will. "My mother is coming for me. Ciao, Will."

Will did not get time to respond since his friend just got up and left. "Ciao," Will repeated. It was a word he was unfamiliar with. The young mer frowned, but he smiled softly when he saw the box of fishing lures Hannibal had brought him. It had been so sweet of him and it was not something he had to do. He had wanted to. For Will.

Carefully, Will took the box and began his trip back home. This was a precious gift from Hannibal and he was going to make sure it stayed safe. He still had the charcoal pencil that Hannibal had dropped in the water.

He had a tiny collection of human items, but there was no way he could keep them all in his room. When Will got a little closer to Primavera, he noticed a particular area full of seagrass and some rocks. He found a little opening of a large rock that made it look like a mini cave. Will had no other ideas, so he placed the box of fishing lures in there.

If he kept it with him, Jack and Bella *would* find it. When they did in that situation was not going to mean anything good for Will. Besides, they had no clue it was his and he could come over here and "look for shells" when he wanted to check out his human items.

Will smiled at the box before heading back home. He would always cherish the human gifts Hannibal gave him.

Chapter End Notes

Vieni qui per favore = come here please

- If I'm wrong on any of these Italian phrases please lemme know 💙

Quattro

Chapter Summary

> Hey guys here's another update to Stranded with Love. I'm feeling quite joyous today since tomorrow I'm traveling with my family to our vacation destination so I'm super super happy.
> I hope you all enjoy this update and thank you everyone for the kudos and reads 💜💜💜💜💜💜

Will was plating the table for them as he always did. He liked being helpful to his adoptive family. Jack and Bella never asked anything of him, but even so when there were chores needing to be done or help needed he performed all tasks without complaint.

Bella had brought in the dishes of sea cucumbers, seaweed, fish and mussels, when Jack decided it was the best time to argue. Will was already at his place at the table with Jack.

"What is the king thinking? Mason is not an ideal heir for the throne!" Jack argued as if someone was there opposing with his opinion.

No one was though. Will knew a vast majority of the mers of Primavera were not too thrilled for the future king. Molson was aware of this and threatened anyone to death if they so disrespected the new king in front of him. Everyone spoke of Mason behind closed doors since they did not want to lose their lives.

Bella rolled her eyes as if she had already gone through this with her husband. "Jack, what can anyone do? Mason is the eldest child and one son."

Jack was too passionate about this whole situation. "What about the princess? Molson has another child. Margot would be a better ruler than her brother!"

No one saw much of Margot, the princess of Primavera. She kept to herself and since she was not the heir, she was not expected to leave the palace and see the citizens. If she ever did leave the palace, her lady-in-waiting Miriam was always with her. Some people suspected Molson just wanted to keep his daughter in the palace and that was it.

Will knew nothing much of Margot. He could not even pinpoint a moment in which he had ever seen the princess.

Bella replied to her husband. "Even if she was the eldest, Molson believes in only kings ruling kingdoms. He's a stubborn mer."

"So we are stuck with a brat for a king." Jack was in disbelief of the matter. No one could take matters in their own hand since Molson was still king and could sentence death upon

others. "He'd have no choice if something were to..."

"Jack!" Bella gasped and smacked Jack's hand. She could not believe the words that had come out of his mouth. "You do remember you are talking about a *child*, right?"

"I'm just saying, what would Molson do if he lost his son? All he'd have is his daughter. She'd have to be queen." Will started eating his food while Jack and Bella went on and on. Politics were a lot.

They were all nearly finished with dinner when Will could not help but wonder. "So...Mason will be the ruler for Primavera?"

"We're hoping no." Jack replied honestly.

Bella turned to face her husband, "Even if he is," she then wheeled around to look at Will, "everything will be fine. Don't worry about it, Will."

Don't worry about it. Don't worry about it.

Will felt like when someone said those words it meant that it was the perfect time for everyone to worry.

All he could really think about now was how sad Hannibal was earlier. He hoped he did not make his one human friend mad or sad. He would have comforted him if Hannibal did not have to leave. His friends tried comforting him after he found out his parents were dead. In the beginning, he just wanted to be alone, but as time passed it was nice having someone to talk to about them.

He could be that for Hannibal. If he needed to talk about something, Will would be there for him. He just did not want to see Hannibal sad.

There were so many questions Will had. Most of them were about the human world in general, but none of them were as important as what was making Hannibal so dejected. There was something going on and there was no way Will was going to ignore it.

He wanted to help Hannibal. The human was his friend and he has never once harmed him (which he was starting to wonder why all mers thought humans would harm them).

What might make him happy? Will thought as he considered getting his friend something.

Will knew that Hannibal loved to sketch, but none of those items could be found underwater. Humans disposed of stuff they did not want in the water, so what could be of value in the ocean that could make Hannibal smile?

It was then his eyes caught the sight of the light brown, spiral turritella sea shells he had collected for *Bella's necklace*. Sea shells were all unique and pretty. He knew mers of all ages loved being gifted shells. They were a part of the ocean, so maybe Hannibal would like some sea shells?

Will got up from his seagrass bed and swam out of the window in his room. Luckily by this time everyone would be asleep or inside their homes. It was late and he knew he should be home. It was already dark which grownups always said was the time young mers should not be wandering out.

All of the warnings he had been told went in one ear and straight out of the other. He was going to find some shells and tomorrow morning, he'd present his gift to Hannibal.

If it meant seeing his friend smile, so be it.

He had made it near the seagrass area where he had left his human items when he saw a bunch of sea shells scattered nearby. Will swam close and inspected the ones he found.

Will found some imperial volute shells that looked like they resembled a king's crown. He also found a bunch of natica lineata seashells that were light weight shells with brown lines.

The young mer gathered all the shells and swiftly swam back home. If anyone saw him outside at night, he would be punished for certain. Luckily, he did not have to hide and simply swam back through his window and into his room. He placed the shells where the turritella shells and would have to make sure he did not forget them when he saw Hannibal again tomorrow.

Hopefully, he could make Hannibal feel better.

Cinque

There was no one stopping him today. Right after breakfast, Will went back to his room and exited from his window to make it back to the shore. Before leaving, he made sure to grab the sea shells he had collected for Hannibal.

When he got to the shore, he could see Hannibal sitting there. He was holding something in his hands. Will could not see the charcoal pencil or the white thing Hannibal sketched on.

In Hannibal's hand was a white small human object with blue designs on it. The object looked like it could scoop or hold something in it. Will wondered what it was.

As if reading his mind, Hannibal said, "This is a teacup, Will. Humans drink out of it."

What do humans drink in it? Will pondered. He gasped when Hannibal held out the teacup for Will to take. Will set the shells down and gently took the teacup.

Once Will was holding the teacup in his hands, Hannibal exhaled. His maroon eyes were glued to the cup. "It belonged to my little sister, Mischa."

Will looked at Hannibal. His friend had never mentioned that he had a sibling. The teacup belonged to his sister. Did she not want it anymore? Hannibal never talked about her until now which was more telling than Will realized.

As if reading Will's mind, Hannibal continued. "She loved tea parties. In her room, she would gather all her stuffed animals and would throw a tea party. She had a plastic teapot and teacups. She always wanted a real set. So, I got her one. A gorgeous china teaset. There were blue roses painted on every cup, the teapot, everything..."

Will eyeballed the blue roses on the teacup he held. It was a beautiful item. It looked like it had been made with care and love by how lovely it was crafted.

"My father thought she would love it. When I was having a hard time figuring out what to get her for Christmas, he was there to help me out. He always knew the way to get the right answer. He never got to see the teaset I had gotten Mischa, but...I think he'd say it was the perfect set for her." Hannibal's voice shook as tears slowly cascaded down his face.

Will stopped admiring the teacup when he spotted Hannibal's tears. "Hannibal, you don't have to say anything if you don't want to." He would like his friend to open up to him, but it was hard watching him cry.

Hannibal shook his head and wiped his face with the back of his hand. "No...you shared something with me, Will. You didn't have to...I'm just some human you shouldn't be talking to..."

I wouldn't want to talk with anyone else, Will thought.

"It must have been a lot to talk about such painful memories. I want to do the same because there's no one to talk to." Hannibal had removed his hands and his maroon irises were staring into Will's cerulean ones.

It broke Will's heart to hear that Hannibal could not talk to someone. Will had Jack, Bella and his friends. It was hard talking to them at first but he knew that they were always there.

"But...your mother? Or your uncle and aunt? You cannot talk to them?" Will could see that was a no due to Hannibal's sad smile.

"My uncle is still devastated by the death of his brother and my aunt, she wishes to comfort him. I don't want to talk about it sometimes because I know it'll hurt him. My mother...she's lost in her own world. She didn't want to live in our home because she couldn't live in the place where her husband and daughter died...she doesn't want to live in France cause there are no memories there...

"She chose Florence because it's as if Papa and Mischa's ghosts are here. She thinks of the good memories here. It's like living here she can relive them as if they weren't gone..."

Hannibal stopped for a moment. More tears were running down his face. Will wanted to hug the human, but he was worried. What if someone saw him? He could always quickly jump back into the water.

Will snapped out of his thoughts when Hannibal found the strength to continue. "I wish she'd just wake up. I wish she'd see how much *I* need her."

The mer placed a hand on Hannibal's. "I'm sorry she sent you away. You love your uncle and aunt, but it's not the same. Her own grief has taken over and she can't see how in a way she's hurting you." Will lost both his parents, so he could not entirely relate to Hannibal's struggle, but he could see the pain in his friend's eyes.

Hannibal cleared his throat and wiped away at his face. "I...I haven't spoken to anyone about this. You're the first one, Will. I must thank you for...being a friend."

Will smiled. "You're welcome, Hannibal." He knew he could always rely on his friends back home if he ever needed to talk to someone. "I'm always here...if you ever need to talk."

Hannibal stared at his sea friend, not saying a word. His maroon eyes landed on the little group of shells nearby. "I see you've brought something."

Will remembered he had brought something. "You're always bringing human things and I don't know I just...I wanted to bring you something too."

Hannibal picked up two shells, examining them closely. "As lovely as this is, you didn't have to do this."

"I know, but I wanted to." Will answered, his cerulean eyes meeting Hannibal's maroon ones. For a moment, their eyes were lost in each other's. Will could feel his face heating up from Hannibal's staring.

After what felt like forever, Hannibal broke his gaze and looked back at the shells. He started complimenting how pretty they all looked and that he would sketch all of them when he got home. Will knew that everything was fine now.

As Hannibal spoke, he smiled. It meant that everything was fine now.

Sei

Chapter Summary

> Hey guys I'm back from my amazing vacation *I miss it already 🥲🥲🥲* so I'm back to welcome you all with another update so hope you enjoy 🥰🥰🥰🥰🥰

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

It had been a week since Will had made a new friend. He would wake up, eat with Jack and Bella, bid the couple a good day and sneak out from his window of his room. He no longer trusted leaving from the front. He knew he has not seen his mer friends in some time since he has been spending time with Hannibal, but he knew they would have questions. Even now, he knew it was highly likely that they already had questions waiting for him to answer.

Still, Will could not bear to stay away.

Not only had human items interested him, but his human friend did too. Hannibal was the only human he knew. Will could live his life well if the boy was the only human he'd ever meet. He could not imagine a different human being more intriguing than his friend who loved to sketch.

As always, Will swam far from Primavera. He would be back soon. Sometimes his meetings with Hannibal were short. He said that he always headed off to the beach in the morning unless his mother had plans. Hannibal still had not informed him on what the opera was, but Will figured he would at some point.

When he arrived at the shore, he saw Hannibal stare at the horizon with an empty stare. Will asked Hannibal what was wrong and he was not expecting the human's words.

"I wish summer lasted longer." Hannibal muttered softly as did not look down at his sea friend he knew was present.

Summer!

Will had forgotten about it ending. He had not even taken it into consideration. Now all he could think about was when Hannibal explained that he stayed in Florence in the summer and then went back to Paris.

He always came back to Florence though. He was never gone forever. Will was sad now that he realized that his human friend would have to leave him.

"It'll be different without you." Will said, looking down at the sand.

Hannibal finally eyed his friend. It was not ideal for either of them, but it was inevitable. He fished something out of his pocket and extended his hand towards Will. The young mer looked to see a different type of stick in Hannibal's hand. It was black and then it became silver and pointy at the tip.

"What's this?" Will questioned.

"It's a scalpel. It's used in the medical field to cut, but I use it to sharpen my charcoal pencils." Hannibal informed his sea friend. "It's my favorite one. It was a gift Mischa had given me. My father told her it would help with my drawings. Will, I want you to hold onto it for me."

Will's jaw gaped.

It was a gift from his sister and now he wanted him to hold onto it? It was so precious though. Will knew there was no way this was the right thing to do. It belonged to Hannibal and it had been a gift.

Will shook his head. "Hannibal, no, I can't."

Hannibal smiled sweetly at the young mer. "I leave for Paris today and I won't be back for a few months. I will be back though. I'm giving to you to hold onto for me, Will. So you'll know I'll be back." He still kept his hand out for Will to take the precious item.

Reluctantly, Will took the scalpel and held it. The object felt cold and when he gently put his finger on the tip it felt like it was going to break his skin.

"Don't hurt yourself with it, please. You shouldn't have to use it, but just...be careful. I'd hate for you to get hurt." Hannibal warned.

Will giggled and glanced at his friend. "I'll protect it and keep it here for when you come back."

"Good." Hannibal said with a short nod. He took another glance at the waves. "I wish I would've met you sooner, Will, but I'm still grateful for having met you in the first place. This summer has become memorable because of your presence."

Will knew that he had not smiled in some time until he had met Hannibal. The human had changed his life in a good way too.

"I'm happy I met you too, Hannibal."

For a moment the two boys just stayed there watching the roaring waves. Thankfully, no one bothered them. It was a comfortable silent. Two friends enjoying each other's presence.

It was going to be odd for Will to not swim up to the shore for his human friend.

At some point the worst happened. They were still watching the waves when a familiar female called out, "Hannibal! Hannibal! Tempo di andare!" Will knew it was time.

Hannibal exhaled and got up from the sand, but his maroon eyes were glued to his sea friend. "I'll see you soon, Will. When I return, we will have more fun. I promise to bring more human items."

I just want to see you, Will thought, but he kept it to himself. "It sounds fun! I can't wait..." He remembered saying this to his parents when they left for their trip. "Be careful, Hannibal."

"I will and you too." Hannibal smiled. He turned back and then turned to Will again. "Until we meet again. Ciao, Will," he said with a little wave.

Will waved back. "Ciao, Hannibal." He swam a little bit away so Hannibal could go. He did not want his friend getting in trouble with his mom. He saw his friend leave by looking up in the water. Once Hannibal was gone, Will smiled and swam back home.

As he was making it towards Primavera, he spotted Alana and Beverly near the seagrass where he kept his human items. He hid his hands behind his back to hide for scalpel. They both eyed him suspiciously.

"Where have you been, Will?" It was Beverly who started the interrogating.

Will knew he would have to figure out other ways to hide hid little secret in the future. He did not want to stop seeing his human friend.

"I was out searching for shells." Alana had heard of that one before.

Alana raised an eyebrow. "Really?" She eyed Will's arms since they were mainly behind his back. "Did you find any?"

Will nodded and swam a little further. "I'm going to start making that necklace now. I have all the shells I need."

Beverly smiled. "Alana told me you were making a necklace for Bella. She'll like that."

"I hope so." Will muttered, wishing to just swim away. Later he would still have to put the scalpel with the rest of his human items which he hoped his friends had not discovered yet. "I'll see you guys later!" Alana and Beverly watched their friend swim away.

Beverly sighed. "I don't believe him."

Neither do I, Alana thought. There was nothing either of them could do though. "Yeah."

Will was hiding something.

Chapter End Notes

Translations:

"Ciao" - Hello/Goodbye

Sette

Chapter Notes

Translations:

As our dear Hannibal explained to Will already ☺
"Grazie" - Thank you
"Amico mio" - My friend

4 YEARS LATER

"Are we supposed to take this heir seriously?" A yellow tailed mermaid, Jocelyn, argued at the marketplace. Her daughter, Georgia, was occupied with her friend Beth.

Jocelyn was conversing with another mermaid, Emma, about their concerns regarding the new heir. The king was nowhere nearby, so merfolk still argued about the prince.

Emma sighed and eyed her two sons who were giggling at some yellow tangs. "I have to keep an eye on them. I don't want them running into the prince and causing him to go berserk on them."

"He must be taken care of. There's no way to feel safe with that little brat on the throne." Jack told both women. He could understand the concern of the two mothers. He may not have children, but he wanted Will to be safe too.

Another mermaid, Kade, with a peach colored tail scowled at them. "Are the three of you that brainless?! No disrespect towards the prince is to be heard by the king and you go saying something like that, Jack?"

"You know I'm telling the truth, Kade!" Jack exclaimed in frustration. If anyone was verbal on the future concerns of the kingdom, it was Jack. "Just yesterday he had someone punished for forgetting to call him *Your Highness.*"

Jocelyn and Emma gasped at Jack's words. Jack would know more of what happened since he was an official guard at the castle. Most people despised the prince, so they all spoke to each other about it, especially when the king was not nearby. No one liked the way the heir was behaving, so no one was going to tell on anyone.

As much as Kade argued that there was no use in complaining, she was not going to tattle on Jack.

"That boy needs to learn a less or two." An older merman, Lawrence, muttered as he stood by overhearing the conversation.

Jack eyed Kade with a longing look. "The kingdom will suffer with Prince Mason on the throne, *you* know that, Kade."

The mermaid huffed and swam away from the group of mers. Jack was right.

🐚 ***Hannigram*** 🐚

It was the beginning of summer and like always, Will was going to head up to Castiglioncello, the name of the beach. The second summer they hung out, Hannibal told him all about the beach. His mother's villa was not too far away from it so that's why she trusted him to walk to the beach and back home all on his own.

He was supposed to be heading to the beach, but his friends were needing his attention this time around. Alana was nowhere to be found, but Will suspected he'd be seeing the blue-eyed mermaid soon. Beverly was dragging Brian, Jimmy and he towards the marketplace with a large grin.

"What's the point of this again, Bev?" Brian questioned curiously.

Beverly swam past a group of tiny mers as they made their way into the marketplace. "King Molson is gonna be making an announcement today."

"So?" Brian and Jimmy asked in unison. Will rolled his eyes and shook his head. Those two were most definitely inseparable. Will suspected they would just get closer as they got older. Jack and Bella said they would more than likely be mates too.

"Prince Spoiled Brat and Princess Margot *have* to attend those announcements." Beverly said briefly, leaving more mystery to the whole thing.

Jimmy tilted his head. "Why would *that* concern us?"

Beverly finally stopped when she was near a patch of seagrass. Will stood near her as he tried to see where she was looking. At the center of the marketplace, King Molson was there

making whatever announcement he thought was important. Behind him were guards and his children.

Will knew what Mason looked like already. He was a fair, blonde ivory tailed mer with a smug look on his face. Will wondered what poor unfortunate soul was going to face Mason's wrath today.

Standing next to Mason was the Princess Margot. She was rarely seen, but when she was out and about, no one could deny her beauty. She had dark brown hair that flowed down her back like a river. She had piercing light green eyes and fair skin. Her tail looked similar to the color of pearls and like pearls, there was a shimmer to Margot's scales.

Will spotted movement in the corner of his eye. Not too far away but near the direction of where the royal children were, Alana was there with her mother listening to Molson. Will saw Alana's mother stare at Molson, but Alana's eyes were elsewhere. Will followed Alana's gaze and it led him back to Margot.

Interestingly enough, the princess was looking right back at Alana.

"See?" Beverly whispered. Will was too focused on Margot and Alana's staring to listen to Beverly. "I think Alana has a thing fo the princess."

"Just because they're looking at each other?" Jimmy inquired with doubt.

Beverly replied. "Why else would she be looking at the princess? She's supposed to be listening to the king like her mom!"

It was when Molson finished when Margot and Alana snapped out of their trance. Everyone clapped right after Molson spoke. Soon enough, the king was heading back to his home with his children following in tow.

Will turned to Beverly. "How did you know they were going to stare at each other?"

Beverly smirked. "It was a few weeks ago when the princess was outside of the palace with her guards. You know how rare of an occurrence that is." When she received nods from her friends, she continued. "I was with Alana and I caught her staring at Margot."

Brian chuckled. "So because of them staring you think they're...in love with each other?"

"Something's definitely going on, that's what I'm saying." Beverly answered.

"You're gonna tease Alana about this, aren't you?" Will asked with a knowing smile.

Beverly bowed her head at Will. "I wouldn't be me if I didn't do some teasing," she said with a wink. Will felt like he knew what she was saying in her head. *When you fall in love, I'm gonna be teasing you too.*

Will did not doubt it for a moment.

🐚 *Hannigram* 🐚

After seeing Alana and Margot stare at each other, Will swam away once more from Primavera. He knew Beverly was going to search for Alana and tease her about it. Brian and Jimmy would stare them and watch the whole interaction. They might ask Alana some questions too if they felt like it.

Will was not too concerned about teasing Alana about her crush on Margot. He had a human to see.

The fourteen-year-old mer came across two sea turtles as he made his way to Castiglioncello. Once he was at the spot where he usually met Hannibal, he could see the other pre-teen there sitting on the land like always.

"Hello Will." Hannibal greeted the mer boy. He was holding something in his hands and a basket sat right beside him.

Will sent Hannibal a small wave and smile. "How have you been Hannibal? And your mother?"

"I've been fine and she's been...well. She's been having good days so far." Good days meant when Hannibal's mother did not begin tearing up and closing off from everyone. Will learned what it all meant from Hannibal.

If Hannibal was out here longer with him at Castiglioncello it mostly meant his mother was being distant. Although Will enjoyed Hannibal's company, it meant his mother wanted to be all alone. Being with Hannibal resulted in his human friend being hurt in some way.

Will just wished there was a way that Hannibal would not be hurt at all.

Hannibal cleared his throat and set what was in his hands down on the sand. It was a round object that was painted black and white with gold touches here and there. Will watched Hannibal open the little object and a little tune roared from the object. Inside of it were two tiny people moving around inside the object.

"Whoa...what is this?" Will was in awe with the object. What were the two little people doing? He could see how they were holding each other closely.

Hannibal's attention was on the basket next to him. "It's a music box. When you open it it plays music. The people in there are dancing. It's something humans enjoy."

Probably doesn't require a tail, Will thought when he saw the two people had little legs. "It's pretty..."

When Hannibal took something from inside of the basket, Will's attention moved to his human friend. There was flat dish in Hannibal's hand that looked similar to the patterns on Mischa's teacup. On top of the dish were round, orange cups, but they looked nothing like the teacup Will had first seen.

"This is *sanguinaccio dolce*." Hannibal placed the dish on the towel he was on so Will could see. "It is a southern Italian delicacy. It is made from chocolate and pig's blood."

Will was thunderstruck by one word in particular. "*Blood*?"

"Yes, it's quite delectable." Hannibal remarked, taking two gold thin objects out from the basket. They looked like they could scoop something. He handed one to Will. "Here, you eat it with a spoon."

Will took the golden spoon and examined it closely. It was shiny and pretty like a pearl. He eyed Hannibal who had taken a little orange cup and a spoon. He observed closely as Hannibal dipped the spoon into the *sanguinaccio dolce*. The spoon cupped some of the dark brown delicacy.

When Hannibal raised his spoon up to his mouth, Will looked down at his own before copying the same action. He dipped the spoon into the little orange cup and picked it up once the spoon got some of the dark brown liquid. Like Hannibal, he raised the spoon up to his mouth and tried it.

There was a taste of sweetness and yet metallic-ness to the human food. It was unlike anything Will had ever tried before in his entire life. Was this how all human food tasted?

"What do you think about it?" Hannibal's voice woke Will up from his opinion on sanguinaccio dolce.

Will glanced down at it and then up at his human friend. "I don't hate. It's different. It doesn't taste like sea cucumbers, seaweed or any fish that I've ever tried."

Hannibal smiled amusingly. "Well, I'm glad to have enhanced your palate." After taking another scoop of his serving, Hannibal reached for something behind him. It was the white square and charcoal pencil Will had first seen Hannibal with. "Do you mind if I sketch you, Will?"

Will felt his face heat up. Hannibal wanted to sketch *him*?

He remembered when they first met when Hannibal was just sketching the shores of Castiglioncello. He had sketched it perfectly. Will could only imagine how a sketch of him would look like.

"I don't mind..." Will muttered softly.

"Grazie." Hannibal bowed his head before moving his charcoal pencil all around the white square.

Will had been meaning to ask what the thing Hannibal sketched on was called. "Hannibal?"

"Yes?"

"What is that white square called?" Will pointed at it with the golden spoon in his hand.

Hannibal glanced down at it and went back to sketching. "It's a sketchpad. Inside of it is sketching paper."

"Sketchpad." Will repeated, twirling the spoon inside of the orange cup. He realized how different the texture of this cup and Mischa's teacup were. This orange cup felt fleshy. "Is this a teacup too?"

"Nope. It's a hollowed out orange that is used as a cup." Hannibal explained, noticing his mistake. "I'll have to bring some fresh fruit tomorrow seeing as you don't have any in the ocean."

Will was intrigued to try out more human stuff. "I'd like that a lot," he said with a smile. Hannibal was happy to hear his reaction. "How's the sketching?"

Hannibal stopped sketching momentarily to look up and meet Will's eyes. "It'll take a few moments. Sketching people is a more time-consuming task, but I do prefer it. The most recent sketches I did was of my Aunt Murasaki's maid Chiyoh."

"Chiyoh?" Will could not recall that name, but he knew much about Hannibal's aunt. She came from Japan and she had lost her family long ago, so all she had was her husband, Robert, Hannibal's uncle. Of course, Will knew nothing of Japan, but once Hannibal had brought a book that talked all about the world. He showed him a bit of what Japan looked like. There were tall, thin buildings and plants that reminded him or the kelp forest, but they had pink little things that Hannibal called flowers or cherry blossoms.

Will was enthusiastic every time he visited Hannibal. There was always something new Hannibal brought. Will was always learning new things about humans. It made him wonder why mers despised them or why they were not curious to learn more about them.

Sure, they polluted the ocean, but not all of them did. Will had found something clear once when he was meeting Hannibal. Will examined it the moment Hannibal showed up. The human shook his head when eyeing the clear object.

"*Some people don't understand how bad plastic can be for the environment." Hannibal had taken the clear object and angrily stared at it. "If people want to use plastic, they need to*

dispose of it properly!"

Not all humans polluted, just like not all mers were nice like Mason.

"I consider her as a friend or cousin. She's the only other person I've talked to about Mischa and my father." Hannibal went back to sketching, his hand moving to and fro all over the sketchpad. "I think she'd like you."

Will would be delighted to meet Hannibal's family. Jack and Bella would be livid enough knowing he interacted with *one* human, but more than that? He would probably kill them by the news of meeting more than one human.

"Isn't she in Paris?" Will knew as much about Paris as he knew about Japan. Hannibal had mentioned the countless French recipes he was practicing mastering. Hannibal promised to bring him some once he thought they were *worthy* to share. Will figured Hannibal must be some perfectionist.

Hannibal nodded. "I tell her about Florence. She's only ever been to her home in Japan and Paris. I think she'd like Florence."

"Maybe one day she'll visit." Will stated positively. He scooped up some more sanguinaccio dolce into his spoon until the orange was empty. At that moment, Hannibal stopped sketching. "Can I see the sketch?"

Hannibal was hesitant, but he turned the sketchpad to the side and moved it so Will could see.

Will tilted his head a bit to examine the sketch. It was peculiar seeing his face on something else. How was that even possible? He could recognize his own dark crazy curls that nearly went past his ears. Hannibal had captured him while he was scooping up some sanguinaccio dolce.

It looked exactly how he thought it would look of him eating the delicacy.

"Wow...Hannibal, it looks..." Will nearly extended his hand to touch the sketchpad, but he did not want to ruin Hannibal's work. "Amazing. You're really talented at sketching!"

The mer missed Hannibal's flushed face as he received the compliment. "Grazie, Will. Sandro Botticelli is one of my favorite painters. I've been trying to perfect my version of one of his paintings."

"You've said *Grazie* a few times to me. What does it mean?" Will wondered aloud.

Hannibal snickered at Will's curiosity. "I speak Italian when I'm in Italy and French when I'm in France. *Grazie* means thank you. We've said *Ciao* which is the equivalent of hello and bye."

"*Grazie*." Will tried it out on his tongue.

"Don't worry, amico mio. I'll teach you some Italian. Maybe a little bit of French too." Hannibal took back the sketchpad and brushed away at it.

Amico mio? Will would have asked what it meant if he did not recall Hannibal say he would teach him some Italian sooner or later.

There would be time for him to get to know more. More about humans.

More about Hannibal, he thought jubilantly.

Will eyed the little group of sea shells he had brought back from the ocean. Since there was nothing else he could think might interest Hannibal, he thought shells would be fine. He frowned at them. Hannibal was giving him so much of his world. Will had seen shells on the sand a few times.

Hannibal could easily obtain shells at any time.

"Have the shells insulted for you to frown at them?" Hannibal inquired humorously.

Will picked up a single scallop shell and exhaled deeply. "I feel bad." He tapped it lightly on top of a cowrie shell. "You give me so much and I just give you a bunch of shells."

Hannibal gave Will his undivided attention. "I don't have to bring anything with me. I enjoy your company with or without bringing anything. I *want* to though. You didn't have to bring the shells, but you still did. It's the thought that matters. I love all the shells you've brought me. They're all meaningful to me."

Will knew his face must have been pink by Hannibal's words. He appreciated them no matter what.

"Then I'll always bring shells for you." Will could not ignore the way his heart raced suddenly. Seeing Hannibal's smile was all he could think about.

"And I'll be happy every time you bring them for me. I'll love every single shell you bring me." Hannibal said.

All because they're from me, Will thought. It did not matter what he brought. It was the fact that he thought of Hannibal enough to want to bring him something.

Will hoped Hannibal could not hear how fast his heart was beating. It was all Will could hear now, thanks to Hannibal.

Otto

It was early in the morning when King Molson's advisor, Matteo, with his head hanging swam out of the palace to the center of the marketplace where many mers at already. They had been going about with their day as always. If an announcement needed to be made, the king would swim towards the center of the marketplace and everyone would stop to listen.

It was not the king this morning though.

"Mers of Primavera!" Matteo barked loudly for all to turn their attention to him. When majority of the mers had their eyes on him, Matteo continued. "I have unfortunate news to deliver today. This morning, His Highness the King Molson, has died. We must hope that he goes with our ancestors where he'll become a part of the sea and will rest peacefully."

There were all types of reactions Matteo gained. Mermaids gasped and the mermen began conversing with each other.

Matteo cleared his throat, silencing all the mers. "As royal advisor and since Prince Mason is only fourteen, I will be taking charge. The prince will be obtaining the throne when he turns sixteen where I shall continue my duties as royal advisor."

Right after his announcement, Matteo swam back towards the palace. Later there would be a ceremony to honor King Molson, but for now everyone was just supposed to let the news settle.

Will had heard little bits of it as Bella and he were in the marketplace picking something up. He was planning on adding to his collection since it had been a bit late yesterday. Besides, today Hannibal was supposed to be out shopping with his mother.

"Oh, how terrible." Bella mumbled as they swam back home. Will was right behind her as they returned with what they needed.

Will wondered why this had happened. "Why did he die so suddenly?"

"Well, King Molson wasn't the youngest mer around. Kings don't have eternal life. When Mason takes the throne, he won't live forever." Bella informed the young mer.

Will's nose wrinkled at the mention of Mason. Jack had plenty to say about the prince. "I know people would rather he-"

"I know that's Jack talking." Bella interrupted him, wanting him to hush. "Sure, having Mason as the next king isn't ideal, but complaining won't do a thing either."

"So it's best to just accept it." Will said as a statement rather than a question. Bella sighed and turned away from the young mer.

Will frowned at Bella, but he headed off to his room. He wondered what it could possibly mean having Mason as the next king for Primavera. He had no reason to like Mason, but it seemed like it did not matter about anyone's opinion.

"It's just how it is." Will said aloud. He dug up a little from his seagrass bed to see two human objects he had received from Hannibal recently.

One object was about the size of Will's hand. It was a dark blue with black little pointy things on one side. It had some intricate little designs on the back of it. Hannibal called it a hairbrush. It was used to brush out your hair. Will had tried it numerous times, but he found the object better used when he was dry.

The second object was a red soft object that could hold stuff inside similarly to a mermaid's purse. Instead, you'd find no baby sharks in this object, but you could stuff things inside. It was called a *bag*. If he found other human objects lying around, he could place them in his bag and head to where he kept his collection.

Will sighed happily seeing the two objects. He wished he could stay on Castiglioncello with Hannibal all day and talk to him about anything.

He placed the hairbrush in his bag and swam out of his room. He could see other mers still up and about, but none of them caught sight of him.

Once he arrived at his destination, he noticed some herrings surrounding the area. He wrinkled his nose and swam towards where his little collection was. He shoved a small rock he had placed there to hide the tiny cave. Inside were all the human objects Hannibal had gifted him in the past.

The charcoal pencil, the scalpel, the music box and a few other items. Will opened up the little bag and placed the hairbrush with the collection. Playfully, he grabbed two of the fishing lures from his fishing lure box. It was one of the first things Hannibal had ever brought him.

So simple and he could hear how Hannibal was shocked that he had been so happy to see the fishing lures. Hannibal once wondered aloud if he would have been a fisherman *in another life.* Will had just laughed it off and was joyous to have the fishing lures.

Will eyed the cloth flower Hannibal had given him. It had a single green stem with a red blossomed bud on top. Hannibal said it was called a *rose*. Will felt his cheeks heat up as he picked up the cloth flower and remembered that moment.

Will was too busy looking at a sketch Hannibal was showing him. It was of Chiyoh, he said. She was a pretty girl with her hair up and a small smile as shs stared at someone. The mer had not noticed Hannibal take something from the pocket of his pants.

"This is a rose ." Will turned to look at the new object . It looked like the flowers on Mischas teacup. " It's a cloth rose though. It'll keep its shape if you took it underwater with you ."

" It's pretty." Will commented as he stared at the cloth flower . "I wish flowers grew underwater."

His cerulean eyes were too busy staring at it that he noticed it move away too late. Will blinked when Hannibal's hand moved close to his face . His heart was racing once more.

"There you go." Hannibal said with a pleased smile. He removed his hand slowly as eyed Will.

Will could not see, but he lifted his fingers gently to touch the cloth rose that was now tucked behind his hair. When he looked back at Hannibal he froze. Those maroon eyes were just looking directly at him.

He wondered if Hannibal's heart beat as fast as his did.

Will smiled as he held the flower.

Why could he not stay up on the beach with Hannibal longer? Why must he always have to return to the ocean and Hannibal back to his own life? Was there truly no way they could always see each other?

If Will could have any wish it would be to always be with Hannibal.

The young mer put his collection away and swam back home. As he made it to his room he could hear Jack's voice. He sounded angry.

"I was hoping it would be some time until Molson would die!" Jack exclaimed loudly. Will peaked from behind the wall. He could see Jack placing a hand on the bridge of his nose. "I can't believe this, Bella, I really can't."

Bella sighed angrily. "Can you stop stressing about this? Mason won't even rule until he's sixteen, Jack."

"That's not a long time, you know that." Jack reasoned.

"It doesn't matter." Bella protested. She had her hands on her hips. "Mason has given no reason that someone needs to take his place. He's just yelled at some young mers. He hasn't sentenced anyone to execution which he can't even do!"

"*Yet*, Bella, yet!" Jack claimed, his voice raising slightly. "When he does become king...I fear for Primavera and all the mers that live in this kingdom."

"I know you worry, Jack, and I know you have to. You can't do anything about this though. You have no reason." Bella said calmly, wanting to stop the bickering. "He might give you a reason, but until then, *please* relax." She swam towards him and pecked his forehead.

Jack smiled at her. "I love you, you know that, right?"

"Yes, and I love you too." Bella said, intertwining her hands with Jack's.

Will watched, seeing how much the two loved each other. It reminded him of how his parents were when they were still alive.

He wondered if Jack and Bella's hearts beat fast for each other. He knew he could sometimes not stop looking at Hannibal like Alana and Margot kept staring at each other.

Will tilted his head. *Do I love Hannibal*?

Nove

Chapter Summary

> I'm really enjoying writing this story as much as I enjoy writing The Other One. I'm on fire with this one I have a lot of pre-written chapters which I am so proud of myself for. It's nice having chapters waiting to be posted because than once you get to that chapter you can simply just post it 🥰🥰🥰
> Hope you all enjoy this one 🐚🐚🐚🐚💙💙💙💙💙💙💙

"Your prince does not sound like he is a suitable king." Hannibal expressed honestly afterwards. "I can see why the merfolk would question his ruling."

Will nodded. "I know right? He's always yelling at someone when they forget to refer him as *Your Highness*. He can sometimes just yell at someone when they disagree with him. He's pretty annoying."

"Rude people don't deserve to live unpunished. There's no reason to act so barbaric towards another." Hannibal expressed.

Will nodded. "Rude people suck."

"They do indeed." Hannibal agreed.

"How has your mother been?" Will asked, not wanting to talk about the negative stuff happening below in Primavera.

Hannibal frowned. "She's been okay. Sometimes, she just starts sobbing out of nowhere. I think it's when the memories really get to her. Some days, she is fine and just is happy all day. I know things are hard for her. I know they are."

They're hard for you too, Will nearly said. "What makes her happy nowadays?"

"Many things. Sometimes, we'll be drinking tea and she'll stop and just stare at me. I don't question it like I don't notice. I know why she does it." Hannibal fidgeted with the black little bow he had around his wrist. There was also one on Will's wrist.

Will looked down at the sand. A little crab was making its way towards him. "I think she's grateful, Hannibal. She's devastated she lost her husband and daughter, but she's thankful she has you still. I don't doubt you remind her of your father or even Mischa."

"You're right about that. I think sometimes she simply remembers things from me being here. I wish I could stay with her longer." Hannibal removed the bow from his wrist and placed it in front of him.

"Why don't you?" Will would like to think if Hannibal pleaded that he wanted to live in Italy then his request would be fulfilled. He would probably see Hannibal more if he stayed here than leave off to Paris every time summer ended.

"I tried once, but...she told me it was for the best. That all arrangements were made and all I know is over there. She always tells me it's better that I stay there. Besides, I'm still a minor." Will wondered if Hannibal would be just as happy as he if he could stay in Florence. It's sad that his mother wanted him to be away from her.

It definitely had to break her heart in some way, Will considered.

"What about when you're no longer a minor? Will you stay in France forever?" Will tried not to think about the possibility that he would stop seeing Hannibal when summertime did arrive. One of the best things about his life now was that he had Hannibal.

Even though it was hard to watch him leave when summer was over, Will always knew the human would return to Castiglioncello and see him. Will could not think of a reason to why he would stop coming up to the beach, but Hannibal could have a whole other reason or *reasons*.

"I love Florence. I also love Lithuania and France, but I've grown attached to Florence. Lithuania has too many memories, so it would be painful to return. I think I'll come back here and stay." Will felt joy well up within him.

One day, Hannibal would stay in Florence forever. He would get to see him whenever he headed to the beach. It nearly felt like a dream was coming true.

"It's nice you want to stay here. You'd get to see your mother more often." Will was certain Hannibal would be happy about that.

Hannibal nodded. "I'd also get to see you more too."

Will's skin heated up. He looked away shyly. "I know I'd love that," he said loud enough for Hannibal to hear.

"I promise, Will, one day I'll be able to see you more." Hannibal leaned a bit close, his maroon eyes looking into Will's cerulean ones. "Wait for me?"

"Always." Will muttered.

"Hey Alana, where's your beloved princess?" Beverly jeered while snickering.

The group of mers were in a nearby coral reef. Beverly was lying down where a bunch of clams rested. A crab was slowly crawling towards her, its pinchers retracted and ready to pinch anyone who it considered as a threat.

Alana was blushing madly at Beverly's teasing. She picked up a pink conch and held it in her hands. "I don't know what you're talking about, Beverly."

"You mean you don't want to be with the Princess Margot?" Jimmy teased, giggling and leaning on Brian who was laughing along.

Alana stroked the rough texture of the conch, trying to distract herself from everything. "You guys don't know what you're talking about."

"Alana, we know you like her! We've seen you stare at her whenever she's out of the palace." Beverly elucidated, brushing out a few horses who were tangled in her hair thinking it must have been a kelp forest. "You *love* Margot, don't you?"

"Just as much as Jimmy and Brian love each other." Alana muttered loud enough for them to hear. Now it was Jimmy and Brian's turn to blush and shy away from everyone's looks.

"D-don't know what y-you mean, Alana!" Brian exclaimed, turning away completely, his back facing everyone else.

Beverly rolled her eyes. "Oh come on, we already know how much Jimmy and you like each other. It's as obvious as the ocean being blue!" Will and Alana giggled at that.

"Beverly, you're insane!" Brian crossed his arms and beginning swimming away. Jimmy was following along.

Beverly sighed dramatically. "Come on! Everyone knows it!" She sent Alana and Will a look of disbelief before chasing the two male mers.

Will jokingly shoved Alana's shoulder. "You really do like Margot, don't you?" He knew nothing much about liking another mer. He knows for certain that no mer has ever made him feel a certain way.

Alana nodded. "I do." She looked around as to make sure no one was nearby listening. "I know we haven't had much interaction with each other, but I'd like to get to know her."

"She rarely is allowed out of the palace." Will wondered how the two mermaids were supposed to get to know each other better.

Alana smiled shyly. "Well, now that King Molson is dead...she's been getting out of the palace more often."

Will was surprised yet felt joyful for his friend. "That'll definitely help!"

"She actually approached me at the marketplace a few days ago. *Secretly*, but still. Margot said she doesn't have a lot of friends." Alana explained.

"If she invites you over to the palace, you'll go, right?" It was the only way the two girls would spend more time together. Will left home to Castiglioncello when he wanted to see Hannibal. It was easier for the both of them, especially since Will could not step on land.

"I want to..." Alana said truthfully.

"Why not? I mean, if she is your life mate you're gonna spend a ton of time with her either way." Will knew he would not want to miss the chance of always meeting with his potential life mate. "You should go see her, Alana."

Alana stared at two crabs walking along the sea floor. "Thank you, Will. I know the others mean well even though they were just teasing me."

"They do." Will knew if Hannibal was a merman, his friends would be teasing him too. If they would not freak out, he would have told them all about yesterday how Hannibal promised he would one day make sure they would see each other more often.

In a perfect world, Hannibal and he would be part of the same world. Whether it would be Will as a human or Hannibal as a mer. Will knew he would not be teased if he told anyone about Hannibal. He would gain a lecture and probably someone to keep an eye on him.

"Hey, you okay?" He woke up from his thoughts when he heard Alana's voice. "It seemed like you got lost in your own thoughts."

Will nodded. "Yeah, I'm fine. Just, uhm, please take your chance with Margot, Alana. She'd be lucky to have you as a life mate."

"You're a good friend, Will." Alana expressed with a relaxed smile. Will smiled at her as she grabbed a pink little sea star. "Time to find your intended, hmm?"

Will giggled, finding the irony in her words.

Dieci

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

"What are these?" Will questioned as he eyed the little small rectangular shapes in Hannibal's hands.

"These are tarot cards. They're used to represent insight into someone's past, present and future." Hannibal picked up one tarot card that two naked people were on. "I'm no professional when it comes to tarot card readings, but my mother used to visit a tarot card reader when she lived in Italy as a young girl."

Will took the card that Hannibal handed him, eyeing the two people next to each other. Right below it said *The Lovers.* "Does everyone go to see a tarot card reader?"

Hannibal shook his head. "No, some people don't believe in that stuff."

"Do you?" Will inquired.

"I've never truly considered it. The cards are stunning and I reckon these readings give many people a peace of mind. I think people have the right to believe in what they believe in. My mother did when she was younger, I wonder if she still does."

Will wondered how Hannibal obtained the cards. "Were these her cards?"

"Yes. There's many things my father and she owned that she'd feel better not seeing again. It's hard for her. My father met my mother when he had gone on a trip to Italy. He had purchased her this deck. She can't stand to be around things that remind her of Father and Mischa."

Will tilted his head. "Yet, she lives here where old memories live."

Hannibal frowned at the other cards in his hands. "I suppose it's just her way of dealing with her grief. I love her and if it is what she wants...I can't go against her decision."

Still, it must hurt him to see his mother this way, Will thought, feeling bad for his human friend.

"What do they all mean?" Will changed the subject, not wanting to see sadness on Hannibal's face any longer.

Hannibal smiled and pointed at the card in Will's hands. "That's The Lovers. If it is upright it can mean love, harmony, relationships, values alignment and choice. If it is reversed, then it means self-love, disharmony, imbalance and misalignment of values."

"Upright or reversed?" Will flipped the card the other way.

"I think it depends on the type of deck you get, but that's okay. My mother would be better at explaining." Hannibal chuckled.

Will shook his head. "No, that's okay. I like how you explain it." He glanced back at the card, it made him think about life mates.

Hannibal blushed at Will's words and showed the mer another card. There was a man suspended from a T-shaped cross made of living wood. "This is The Hanged Man. If upright, it means pause, surrender, letting go, and new perspectives. If reversed, it means delays, resistance, stalling and indecision."

"The Fool upright means beginnings, innocence, spontaneity and a free spirit whereas reserved it'd mean holding back, recklessness and risk-taking. Upright The Magician means manifestation, resourcefulness, power and inspired action. Reversed it means manipulation, poor planning and untapped talents."

Will watched as Hannibal picked up one card after another explaining what they meant. He could just spend the whole day listening to Hannibal speak. His voice was so lulling Will knew it could bring him into a nice slumber.

In his hands, he still held The Lovers card. Something about it just made him want to keep it close.

"The Chariot-" Hannibal was about to continue when he turned behind and looked down. He saw there was something there he had forgotten about. "Oh, I have forgotten something."

Will was intrigued as always. "Another tarot card?"

"No, something else I wanted to show you. There is something else I wanted to show you, Will." Hannibal put down The Chariot card and grabbed something that was behind him. It was a black thin square. It kind of reminded Will of Hannibal's sketchpad, but this was a tiny bit thicker.

Hannibal opened the square like a mer would open up an oyster for a pearl. Inside the black square was not a pearl though. Will recognized it as a necklace. It was long and held by some type of rope item. The necklace was silver and there was a big rock on it. The rock was pretty though as it dazzled.

"What is it?" Will queried inquisitively.

"It's a diamond necklace. My mother has a bunch of jewelry that she keeps hidden away. She never touches it. It brings up..." Hannibal paused for a moment.

Will could see Hannibal was having a hard time continuing, so he chimed in. "It's pretty!"

"It is, isn't it?" Hannibal finally found his words. He cleared his throat and set it down. He pulled out his sketchpad and charcoal pencil from behind him. "You'll never find my mother wearing her old jewelry. I was wondering, may I sketch you again Will? This time, wearing the necklace?"

Will was thunderstruck. The necklace was so pretty and looked fragile, but Hannibal wanted him to wear it. It was depressing to think Hannibal's mother would never wear such a pretty piece of jewelry again, but he understood why.

"If you want me to." Will replied, earning a nod from his friend. Hannibal set his sketchpad and charcoal pencil down to get the necklace. Will leaned in close so Hannibal could wrap the necklace around his neck.

The young mer was frozen as he felt Hannibal's skin lightly touch his neck. He gulped at having someone else so close. He nearly leaned into the comforting touch.

"There you go." Hannibal removed his hands and examined Will with the necklace on. "Perfetto."

Will straightened his back and shoulders as Hannibal grabbed his sketchpad and began sketching. He would have asked if Hannibal wanted him to hold something or pose a particular way, but the human had not mentioned anything.

Besides, the sketch was going to look perfect as all of Hannibal's sketches looked.

"Tell me, Will, do mers have jewelry?" Hannibal did not look up when Will opened his mouth to respond.

"We do. We have rings, necklaces and bracelets. Most of them are made with seashells we find. Oh and pearls too!" Will remembered his mother always wore a necklace with a single scallop shell. It had been a gift from his father long ago.

Hannibal looked at Will momentarily before focusing on his sketch. "Has anyone ever given you any?"

Will shook his head. "No, not really. Jewelry tend to be very sentimental, especially when it comes to a couple." Bella had a pearl bracelet given to her by Jack.

"Huh. I think that's a neat thing." Hannibal grinned at Will's words. "My mother told me salt water isn't good for diamonds. It can damage the overall appearance of your diamond by dulling the stones and causing them to become less shiny."

Will hummed dejectedly at the thought that such a pretty thing would get ugly in his own home. It was not his so it did not matter, but still. Not all things could last underwater.

"It's unfortunate though. I bet you'd look as stunning as you do now if you wore that necklace underwater." Hannibal said, causing Will's face to go pink.

"I-it is too bad." Will stammered. He made sure to stay still to not mess up Hannibal's concentration. He tried not thinking about the fact that Hannibal called him *stunning*.

It took a little bit until Hannibal triumphed. Will was exited to see the new sketch. The human showed him his sketchpad and Will was once again blown away. Hannibal had gotten everything perfect. His dark curly hair. His correct facial features. Even the diamond necklace around his neck.

"It looks amazing, Hannibal." Will wished he could keep the sketches, but the paper would be ruined underwater probably.

"Grazie, Will." Hannibal gave the merman a small nod. He eyed the diamond necklace. "Will, I want to give you the necklace."

Will looked up at the human. He clasped the single diamond. "That's very kind of you, Hannibal."

"I just...I wish the diamond would shine forever underwater. It'll lose its shine which would make me sad, but it's a gift for you." Hannibal knew his mother had loved how it shined, but she did not want it anymore and he wanted to give it to Will.

Will wished it would be shiny forever too. "Well, maybe you can hold it for me?" *If only I could walk on shore one day*, Will thought.

Hannibal grinned. "I just want to make sure it always shines, especially for you, Will."

Will could not believe his ears. "Thank you, Hannibal..." Why was this human so good to him? Why could he not walk on land with him?

Hannibal smiled back at him, taking back the sketchpad and staring at it. He was proud of this one too, Will could tell.

If only he could be on land with Hannibal so the maroon eyed human could always sketch him.

If only.

🐚 ***Hannigram*** 🐚

"The palace is beautiful." Alana commented as she followed closely behind Margot as they swam from the entrance to wherever Margot was leading her.

Margot shrugged. "It is a nice, large place. There are many memories in here, but...they're not the best."

The beautiful place is tainted by ugly memories, Alana thought. "I'm sorry for that."

"It's not your fault." Margot stopped to face Alana. She looked behind them to see if anyone was there. "When you have a father who shows no discipline and favoritism for his one son, you realize how unfair things can be."

"Yeah, I'd imagine having Mason as a brother wouldn't be fun at all." Alana agreed. She hoped Margot was not offended.

Margot nodded. "I know people say not so good things about him. I don't blame them. I have nothing good to say either. Just, be careful who you say it in front of?"

Alana raised an eyebrow. "Well, I know not to say anything in front of Mason, of course."

Margot added. "Also his advisor and little henchmen. Matteo was Father's advisor, but Mason replaced him with Cordell. Matteo and Tommaso are Mason's little henchmen. They follow whatever he says, so does Cordell. Please, be careful around them. If Mason found out...I don't don't want to imagine what he'd do to you."

Alana placed a hand over her heart, touched by Margot's words. The other mermaid cared about her so much. "Thank you, Margot. You don't have to worry. I'll be careful."

"Good." Margot looked around one last time before taking Alana's hand and leading her towards another room. Alana followed along.

After some turns and entering a few rooms, Margot finally stopped in one. It was an empty room with a little window. There were seagrass patches around for sitting, corals growing as decoration and even some fish swimming in and out of the room.

Margot dragged Alana down to sit with her on one of the seagrass patches. "I see you're always hanging out with the same group of friends. Three mer boys and one mer girl."

Alana grinned thinking about her friends. She wondered what they were up to while she was talking to the girl she liked. "Yes, they've been my friends for a very long time. I've been friends with Will a tad bit longer because we've lived next to each for a while. Even when his parents were alive, their home was nearby."

Margot's eyes saddened. "I'm so sorry to hear that. It always saddens me to hear we've lost mers, especially mer parents or a mer child."

"Will has been without them for some time. It was hard for him to talk about it, of course, but he's talked about it." Alana was proud that Will has opened up as time passed.

"It can't be easy." Margot said. She had lost her mother at a very young age and losing her father was still painful, but she had gotten to see him more than Will saw his parents. "I'm guessing humans were the cause of their demise?"

Alana nodded. "Sadly yes. I despise humans for causing all the pain they do. They hurt the ocean when they pollute it and their weapons that kill...it's heartbreaking."

Margot wrapped an arm around Alana and pulled her close. "I understand. I'm not a fan of humans. I'm sure all the mers of Primavera aren't."

Alana would have agreed, but something within her told her otherwise. She thought of years ago when the others and she found out Will had gone up to the surface. He had told her he would never do it again, so she believed him. What gave him the instinct to even go up and see in the first place?

"Never mind about that." Alana did not want to talk about such a depressing topic with Margot. "I can introduce you to my friends one day, if you'd like."

"I'd love that." Margot answered, eyeing a blue tang that was following closely behind another blue tang. "Alana?"

"Yeah?"

"...Has anyone approached you yet?" Margot questioned, not making eye contact with the other mermaid.

Alana blushed. It was no surprise for mers to be approached at her age. She had not been though which she was glad about. "No, I have not. What about you?"

"Nope. Father once talked about arranging my marriage. I was unhappy to hear he wanted to. He never said the same to Mason." Margot informed the other mermaid.

Marriage arrangements were not rare amongst the merfolk. Yes, they believed in life mates and some believed some mers were just meant to be, but other mers believed great relationships could be formed when bringing two strangers together. Alana was never fond of the life mate arrangements. She would rather go find her life mate on her own.

"Well, he'll never arrange it now." Alana felt horrible for saying that, but it was true. Margot could find her life mate and not be forced to be with some random merman or mermaid.

Margot nodded, leaning her head on Alana's shoulder. Alana was too lost in the fact that Margot was so close to notice the other mermaid intertwine her pearl white tail with her scarlet one.

It was a few moments when Alana noticed it and she froze. *Only intended ones do that,* Alana thought. She did want Margot to be her intended one though.

"Margot-"

The mermaid princess moved her head and turned to Alana, placing a finger on the mermaid's lips. Alana was silent and looked into Margot's green eyes. Margot removed her finger and moved her hand to carress Alana's face, moving away stands of hair.

Their faces were so close Alana knew that if Margot got any closer their lips would touch.

Alana leaned into the caress and leaned her face close. Margot had done the same, her hand remaining on Alana's face. They would have nearly kissed if it were not for someone clearing their throat.

Margot and Alana jumped where they sat and pulled away, turning to the entrance of the room. At the entrance was Cordell, a wide bald merman with a sand colored tail. He sent both mermaids a smirk.

"Princess Margot, your brother requests your presence." Cordell put his hands behind his back and stayed where he was.

Margot scowled at her brother's advisor. "I'll be right there." She glared at Cordell until he frowned and swam out of the room.

"Sorry you have to deal with your brother." Alana whispered.

Margot shook her head. "No, I'm sorry. Such a moment was interrupted by *him*." She took Alana's hands in hers and squeezed them lightly. "Next time, we won't be interrupted, I promise."

"Margot, our tails...they were intertwined, w-we were about to kiss!" Alana could not believe all that had happened. "What does this mean? I know what *I* want it to mean."

"I like you, Alana. I know what it means to intertwine and to kiss a mer. I'm very much interested in you. I wanted to kiss *you*." Margot picked up Alana's hand and kissed them.

"I like you too, Margot." Alana confessed, wishing Cordell had not disturbed them. He wished the merman would get bit by an eel for that.

Margot pecked Alana's cheek and giggled. She grabbed Alana's wrist and led her out of the room and to the entrance of the palace. She was going to be kind and escort the mermaid out.

Once they were outside of the palace, Margot embraced Alana. "Until next time."

Alana hugged back, "Next time," she whispered before pulling away hesitantly. Alana did not want to leave, but Mason would probably be annoyed if Margot kept him waiting. She sent the princess a little wave before swimming away.

This had been the best day ever for the two mermaids.

Chapter End Notes

Tarot card meanings: https://www.biddytarot.com/tarot-card-meanings/

Undici

Chapter Summary

> Here is another update!!! Great news, so I only have one last chapter to write for The Other One and then the book is complete (because the chapters after Chapter 15 are complete and ready to go ☺☺☺) so I will be able to achieve my goal of finishing that book before the new year I'm still gonna be proceeding with this story and try it too
>
> I hope you all enjoy this update 💙💙💙💙💙

Bella released a deep sigh as she waited at the doorway of her home. She stared in the direction of the palace. Unfortunately, her husband would not be returning home until the morning. Jack had been changed to guard the palace during the night. It's not like she could argue about it. She was the one to tell Jack to just accept everything as it was.

We can't do anything about it, Bella thought as she glanced one last time at the palace and headed back inside.

She was about to head to the room she shared with Jack when a sound caught her ears. Bella swam back outside to see if any mer had made a noise. She could not spot anyone as it was late and most of the mers were inside by this time.

Right after, she went to check on Will. She doubted that the young mer was responsible for the sound. She quietly and slowly entered the room, expecting to see the boy in bed.

She did not expect to be wrong about it.

Bella could not see Will anywhere in the room because he was not in it. She looked around and realized that he was gone. She headed near his window to peer out. She noticed a mer's silhouette took her a second to spot the silhouette of a mer and was convinced that mer had to be Will.

Thankfully, she did not notice the little human object that was under Will's bed that had fallen a moment after he hid it under there and swam off.

Will swam up to the beach like always. It was different this time around. When he went up the surface he was not welcomed by the light blue sky, but a dark sky with white little dots scattered across. Hannibal had told him that those were called *stars* and they always came up at night like how the white puffy things, or *clouds*, came up during the day.

When he made it to the beach, Hannibal was sitting there on his towel like always, but there was something else. There were little lights nearby around Hannibal. They looked pretty and shiny like the stars above. These little lights moved around though.

It was the first time Will met Hannibal at night.

"Ciao Hannibal!" Will greeted his friend with a wide smile. He had gotten used to greeting the other male this way.

"Ciao, amico mio." *My friend*, Will had learned was what Hannibal meant. "I'm happy you were able to meet me during this time. I know it can be seen as unusual to our regular meet ups."

Will waved his hand casually. "It's okay. Bella just thinks I'm asleep."

"Well as long as you won't get in trouble than it works out for me too. My mother thinks I'm asleep too." Hannibal replied.

Will smiled at the human and then eyed the moving lights. "What is this? Are these stars too?" He raised his hand to touch it when he felt Hannibal grab his wrist.

Hannibal touching him made him freeze and stare up at those maroon eyes that kept him in a trance.

"Trust me, Will, you don't want to do that." Will frowned when Hannibal let go of his wrist. "These are candles and they hold a flame, not a star. Flames and fire are one in the same. If you touch them you'll burn yourself."

"Burn?" There was no such as a type of thing in the ocean. Will looked at his hand and then back at the candle. "What are candles used for?"

"To light up rooms or to place mood in a setting." Hannibal clarified. "It's pretty, isn't it?"

Will nodded. "They really are."

"Some people use them to give a *romantic mood* in a setting." Will's cheeks went red by the word *romantic*. "My mother once told me father and she danced in a room of candles. She said it took her breath away and that she had to say yes when he proposed to her after."

Will knew nothing about humans dancing, but it sounded interesting. Clearly, humans had different mating rituals from mers.

"Tell me, Will, what do mermen and mermaids do when it comes to mating rituals?" Hannibal queried with a playful glint in his eyes.

Will blushed. Of course he knew how mers performed mating rituals. He was seventeen and this meant he and other mers were being told all about mating rituals for whenever they felt like courting a merman or mermaid. No one minded same gender couples, it was a norm to them.

Mermen who could carry mer babies like mermaids were becoming an oddity, but none were judged. Most mers believed Poseidon blessed the mer race by giving them some males that could naturally carry children. Will had kept this information from Hannibal for no real reason, but he tried not to ponder on *that* fact.

"Well...mers don't kiss other mers randomly. Mers believe in life mates and we only have *one* life mate. Mers make their intentions clear by providing all sorts of gifts for their intended."

Hannibal raised an eyebrow. "What kind of gifts?"

"Shells, food, anything they think their intended might like..." Will cleared his throat a bit. "If the gifts are accepted it means that mer shares an interest. By then, they'd both talk it out just to be certain the feelings are mutual. Just to prevent any misunderstandings that could have possibly be made."

Hannibal gently moved away a few of the candles that were closest to Will. "And then?"

"Mers don't let anyone touch their tails and scales. Only family, close friends and mates are allowed to. Both mers would make their intentions known by others by touching each other's scales or tails in public. Everyone will know those two mers are a mated pair-to-be and that both are off limits."

Hannibal scooted a bit closer to Will, leaning too close for comfort. Will wished he'd get even closer. "Then?"

"Then finally, they'd kiss." Will whispered. His eyes were now lost in Hannibal's maroon ones. How could anyone pay attention to anything when those beautiful eyes were staring directly at you?

"It sounds so...meaningful. Yet, so much more straightforward than how humans court." Hannibal muttered with sadness in his eyes.

"Are humans different?"

"Sometimes it can be difficult. Hardly any humans believe in a *life mate*. Humans kiss each other all the time, so few attached with anything that isn't carnal. Humans can be complicated." Hannibal said with a deep sigh. He turned back to Will. "So, have you been approached by another mer, Will?"

Will gulped. "N-no, not yet. Bella says she doubts that'll last for long. My *dark curls* and *blue eyes* would make anyone want my attention," he said rolling his eyes.

"I'll have to agree with her." Hannibal moved an inch closer, his hand extending towards Will to place a dark curl behind Will's ear. "Your cerulean eyes and wild curls are gorgeous."

Will wished Hannibal would lean even closer to him. It was like the human read his mind. Hannibal moved his face closer to Will's. Will stayed in place and closed his eyes awaiting for Hannibals soft looking lips.

He imagined kissing Hannibal would bring him life and death. He believed it could possibly feel like the best thing in the entire world.

"HANNIBAL! HANNIBAL!"

Will opened his eyes and saw Hannibal was still right there so close to him. There was disappointment in Hannibal's eyes as he pulled away from Will and looked far behind him.

"I think your mother figured out you weren't sleeping." Will said humorlessly. He doubted Bella has figured it out. She rarely went in his room for any reason.

Hannibal wheeled around towards Will. "I'm sorry for ruining our time together, Will. That was my fault."

Will shook his head. "You didn't ruin anything. Whether it's a second or the whole day, it doesn't matter. It's that I...get to see you."

"I agree completely, Will." Hannibal looked at him adoringly. He started blowing air onto the candles, Will observed. "Go ahead and head home, Will, I'll clean up here."

"I'll see you later." Will said, earning a small wave from Hannibal before heading into the ocean and swimming away from Castiglioncello. Away from Hannibal.

Once he was near the kelp forest, he headed deep within it for a brief moment.

Hannibal was going to kiss him!

Will covered his whole face with his hands as he panicked with excitement if that was possible. He was about to be kissed! Only courted mers were kissed. Then again, Hannibal was a human and he was a mer, so he was not entirely sure how that would work. Was it supposed to work?

How was he supposed to feel?

Even though all the mers in the world would tell him how wrong it was, to him it felt *so right.*

He wished Hannibal and he had shared a kiss. Will turned to look towards the direction of Castiglioncello. Was Hannibal thinking about him? Was he regretting almost kissing him? Or did he wish they had not been interrupted?

Will knew for certain that there was no one else he has ever felt this way towards. No one has ever made his heart beat so fast.

This had to be what being in love felt like.

Will was madly in love with Hannibal.

Dodici

Chapter Notes

> I don't care much for this chapter just because it could have been delivered differently but so far this one I'm not feeling all wow about but this part was necessary for the story so oh well🤣
> I hope you enjoy this update and stay tuned for the next one 💙💙💙💙💙💙

"I don't understand! I-I've done nothing wrong!!" A magenta tailed mermaid named Cassie cried as her arms being held by two mermen guards who were not listening to her pleas.

Mason was looking at the young mermaid sympathetically as if he cared. "Cassie, I don't think your parents taught you any manners. I'm a king and you're an every day mermaid and *you* have the gull to reject me?"

"LET HER GO! DON'T!" A crimson tailed merman, Nicholas, Cassie's brother, swam up, but was pulled away by another guard. His face was red as he struggled and screamed.

Jack sighed and looked towards the young king of Primavera. "Your Majesty, is there any way you can reconsider? Has this mermaid done enough to be seized?"

Mason was offended as he turned to Jack. "I am the *king*. Every merman and mermaid bow down to *me*. They should feel lucky that I'd want *them*."

"I'll change my mind! I-I swear!" Cassie cried out.

Mason looked back at the young mermaid. "Oh Cassie. I was kind to offer my interest in you, but *now*? I don't want anything to do with you."

"If you don't want Cassie anymore, what are you to do, Your Highness?" Another merman, Thomas, questioned Mason.

Mason smirked. "I want her executed."

"NOOOO!!!!!!!!" Nicholas screamed, his struggles being futile.

Will was frozen right next to Alana as they watched the whole scene. Of course, it was happening all in the marketplace. Mason would want everyone to know of him executing someone as a scare tactic so everyone is reminded what he is capable of.

"Holy mother of pearl!" Beverly was right behind them. She had swam away from her family to hear closer. Jimmy and Brian were with their own families probably.

Alana shook her head in disbelief. "This can't be happening." The three of them watched as the guards dragged Cassie away as she clamored and wrestled with them. It was useless.

Jack swam towards Will and the mermaids. "Will, I want you to go home *now*. I'll be there later."

Will was speechless, so he just shook his head. He did not move, so Alana and Beverly pulled him away from everything that was happening.

All mers had to be terrified now.

🐚 ***Hannigram*** 🐚

Mason was staring at the outside of the palace with a smirk on his face. He watched as the two guards who were assigned to make sure Cassie was dead swim away from their posts. The next guards were heading towards the palace for their shifts. Mason glared at the guard Jack, annoyed that the merman questioned his actions.

How dare he?

"I think that was unnecessary, Mason." A familiar female's voice was heard from the other room. It was the only voice he could tolerate. "That mermaid didn't deserve death for rejecting you."

Mason swam into the other room and grinned at the pearl tailed mermaid. "What did she deserve then, Margot?"

"Anything but death." Margot looked at her brother with disgust. They may be of the same flesh and blood, but she could never love him. "He was so wrong."

"Who?" Mason questioned, swimming until he was right next to his sister. "Papa?"

"He was wrong to think *you* were the perfect heir. I can't believe he never stopped you." Margot gritted her teeth.

Mason grabbed a handful of Margot's hair, earning a wince from his sister. "I am the KING, Margot. If everyone has to respect me, so do *you*."

"I'll never respect you." Margot winced as Mason tugged on her hair harder. Mason forcibly let go of his sister's hair and swam out of the room. Margot just glared as he exited.

Get here quickly, Jack, Margot thought.

🐚 ***Hannigram*** 🐚

"Jack, where are you going?" Bella cried out as she stayed in the center of the room.

It had just been the end of Jack's new shift. Bella had only heard bits and pieces of what happened when Alana and Beverly brought Will home. She did not want Will to have to explain that to her so she just waited for her husband to come home.

Jack was enraged by this event. It had been the last straw. "She rejected his marriage offer, Bella! I don't blame her for one thing, but he sentenced her to be executed! I had to make sure she was DEAD!"

Bella covered her mouth with her hands. "Oh Jack, I'm so sorry..."

"I can't let this happen again, Bella. What if that was Will? Or one of his friends?" Bella was thunderstruck by that possible situation. "Luckily I'm not the only one who thinks so."

"What could you possibly mean by that?" Bella questioned.

"A few mermen and I are going to invade the palace. Anything to make sure he's dead. The only one who is loyal to him is his conniving advisor Cordell. Everyone else won't care. Besides, Molson didn't just have one child."

Bella's head hung low, but no matter what, she knew her husband was right. "I see. Just, please be careful, Jack?" Her pleading eyes broke Jack's heart.

Jack placed an arm around Bella and pulled her close, pecking her lips. "I'll be fine and I'll be back. Tomorrow, Primavera will have a new ruler. One they won't fear. One they can respect and be loyal to."

Bella followed Jack out of the home, but stayed as he swam away. She noticed a few mermen follow Jack towards the palace.

Will came from his hiding and approached Bella. "Where is Jack going?"

Bella turned to Will with a positive smile. "It'll be okay, Will. Jack will be back." She pulled the mer into an embrace. She rubbed his back, trying to be hopeful herself.

"And here before you now is the Queen of Primavera!" Jack announced loudly with a large grin as he stood at the center of the marketplace. Right next to him was Princess Margot. She wore the same crown her mother wore when she was alive long ago.

Primavera had never been ruled by a queen before. It had always been a long line of kings, but this was a mark in history that no one would ever forget.

All the mermen and mermaids cheered happily. They were all relieved to see that Mason was gone. There was no need for secrets. Jack had revealed that the group of mermen and he had killed Cordell and then they chased Mason into an area where a bunch of poisonous sea snakes swam. One bite sealed Mason's fate.

Will could see all the joy and relief every mer felt now. He himself was relieved. He would have to tell Hannibal the great news!

Alana was right next to him, her eyes never leaving Margot. *She's clearly in love with her,* Will thought.

Will placed a hand on Alana's shoulder. His friend turned to him. "It'll be okay now, Alana. Everything is going to be fine."

"It will." Alana replied back with a smile.

Will turned back in the direction of the queen of Primavera. Everything would be fine.

Tredici

Chapter Summary

> Another update and I've just finished The Other One, I'm feeling so happy 🥰 (gonna miss writing that story but I'm happy I completed it 😊)

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

🐚 ***5 YEARS LATER*** 🐚

All of the mers of Primavera were clapping and cheering loudly at the sight before them. Everyone was present to see this magnificent event take place. Will was with Beverly, Jimmy and Brian as they witnessed such a happy moment.

Margot and Alana were both looking beautiful as the servants had placed all sorts of dazzling jewelry on them. Necklaces and bracelets of pearls and seashells. Both mermaids smiled as their hands were intertwined.

"Today, we are here to witness the bond of these two mermaids, Queen Margot and Queen Alana." A mermaid, Elizabeth, announced merrily. She turned to Alana. "Alana, do you take Margot to be your life mate? To love, care and be with her for all eternity? To hold onto through the good and bad and to always remain loyal to her?"

Alana kept her eyes on her to-be wife. "I do."

Elizabeth then placed a crown of conch and moon shells on top of Alana's head. "Please, Margot, place the ring on Alana's finger."

Margot turned to her advisor, Ada, who handed her the ring. Margot turned back to intended, placing a ring with pearls on it on Alana's finger.

"Now Margot, do you take Alana to be your life mate? To love, care and be with her for all eternity? To hold onto through the good and bad and to always remain loyal to her?"

The words Elizabeth said reminded Will of a human friend of his. It was not long ago when Will had come to the conclusion that there was only one person he could love, care and be loyal to. Only one person he would want to hold through the good and bad for all eternity.

The universe was cruel though.

How could Will ever love and care for Hannibal? How can he hold onto him through everything for all eternity? They were both from two different worlds. There was no way of showing anyone of their intentions for each other. No tail intertwining. No possibility for a future family.

All they had was the beach they had met each other on.

It broke Will's heart thinking about it. Why did he have to think about such a depressing thing when his friend was experiencing one of the happiest moments of her entire life?

"I do." Margot responded.

Like Margot had, Alana turned towards a mermaid named Miriam who was holding the other ring. Alana took the ring of tiny sundial shells and one melon shell and placed it on Margot's finger.

"I hereby announce you both wives and life mates." Elizabeth herself clapped. Margot intertwined her tail with Alana's. "You may kiss your life mate."

Everyone cheered louder as Margot pressed her lips upon Alana's. A little bit of time had passed when the two mermaids pulled away from each other, their faces still close.

Elizabeth declared to the joyful crowd. "I present to you our rulers, Queen Margot and Queen Alana!"

Everyone of Primavera were celebrating this grand moment. Will swam a bit away from the crowd. To be honest, he knew he was just lost in his own thoughts, but crowds were never his favorite thing. Besides, he was still cheery about the whole ceremony.

He could hear Beverly loudly cheering for the two. She was always there to be the loud supporter for everyone she held close to her.

Will looked up to where the surface was. He could only think of one person, of course.

🐚 Hannigram 🐚

"Jimmy and Brian know they're meant to be but I don't know when one of them is going to start the mating rituals." Alana said as she sat with Will near the coral. It was like some time ago when they would just talk. "Beverly is a free spirit doing things on her own as she should."

Will chuckled. "Beverly is like coral. Flowing back and forth as she wishes."

Alana nodded. "Which means you have to be the one next to get mated." She grinned when she saw Will's face turn pink. "You've never brought up a name, so I'm guessing you've yet to meet that special one?"

That's where you're wrong, Will would have said. His friend would not be pleased if he said, "*Actually Alana, I do have someone I wish to mate for life. He's a human. Would you like to meet him?*" There would be no way anyone would accept those words from him.

Even if by some miracle everyone he knew were fine with it, its not like he could be with Hannibal. He was a merman and Hannibal was a human. How would that ever work?

"Yeah..." Will agreed with her. There was no point in telling her the truth. "Hopefully soon though."

Alana wrapped an arm around Will. "Trust me, Will. You'll find your mer. They're out there waiting for you, you'll see."

Too bad he could not tell her how wrong she was. He leaned close and thought of the one he wished he could call his life mate.

Why was the universe so cruel to him?

🐚 ***Hannigram*** 🐚

There was a sweet, rich scent wafting throughout the villa. It was the rich aroma of coffee and chocolate that filled his nostrils. He guessed his mother was baking again which was always a delightful thing to come home to. His mother baking reminded him of old memories of her baking all sorts of Italian dishes and desserts for Mischa and he.

"Mama?" Hannibal called out to his mother as he stepped into the kitchen. Sure enough, Simonetta Lecter was standing over the island in the kitchen.

"Figlio, back so soon?" Simonetta questioned. "I thought you were spending time with your peers."

Hannibal had been debating on two possible career choices. One was to become a surgeon while the other to be a psychiatrist. Just last year he had tried at Johns Hopkins in Baltimore, Maryland. It had been hard leaving his home in Paris, France.

It was devastating enough that he had lost his dear uncle and that his aunt decided to head back to her home. Chiyoh would be heading to Florence soon though. Hannibal told her she did not have to come, but she wanted to see the beautiful city that he was always talking about.

He realized at Johns Hopkins that being a surgeon was not for him, so he decided to be psychiatrist. He met a lot of people where he did his schooling. Some of them were from Italy and others were just there for school. Hannibal referred to them as acquaintances than *friends*.

"No, I wanted to head home. Besides, they were all busy." Hannibal approached his mother and pecked her cheek. He eyed the bowl with the mix inside. The scent of peanuts, coffee and chocolate made him know instantly. "Torta barozzi?"

"Sí. Figlio, when will Chiyoh arrive? I can't wait to meet her. From what you've told me about her for years, she seems like a nice young woman." Simonetta wheeled around to face her son.

Hannibal remembered receiving a letter from Chiyoh two days ago. He knew he could have easily used his phone, but when it came to people close to him he always wrote letters. They seemed more personal to him and it was unfortunate that it was a dying practice.

"She should be arriving this week. She went with Aunt Murasaki. She wanted to see her home too and help her settle." Hannibal had made sure to be there to see his aunt off and making sure he had given her his letter.

Simonetta smiled warmly at the mention of Murasaki. "I will always be grateful to that woman and your uncle." She raised her hand to carress Hannibal's face. "Without them, you wouldn't be the amazing man you are today."

I thank you too, Mama, Hannibal thought smiling at his mother. "They know you're thankful. You don't give yourself credit, Mama."

Simonetta shook her heads, her eyes becoming watery. "I'm very proud of you, Hannibal. Your father and Mischa...they'd be proud too." The woman held her son's face a moment longer before going back to her baking. "I'm inviting the Pazzi's over for dinner. Will you be joining?"

Hannibal eyed the door and thought of going to the beach. It had been some days since he had seen Will. He had told him that he would be focusing on his school and that he would visit when he could. The merman had been so understanding. Hannibal loved pursing his degree, but he would rather be on the beach with Will.

"Sí, Mama." Hannibal answered. Maybe he would head out late at night. Will had told himtl that ever since they met at night that one time, he would always check morning and night to see if he was there. He never checked in the afternoon since they would always meet in the morning and on rare occasions, nighttime.

"You like the company of the Pazzi's, I see." Hannibal knew very little about Rinaldo and Allegra. He knew that they were newlyweds. Rinaldo worked as an inspector and Allegra is a stay-at-home wife.

Simonetta chuckled. "Well, Rinaldo is a gentleman and Allegra is so kind. That night when you were busy, she came over! I like their company."

"I'm delighted to hear you enjoy their company. Luckily tonight, I will get to meet them." Hannibal said with a genuine smile. He liked meeting new people so it would be a pleasure to meet the couple this evening. Even though he would rather be elsewhere.

🐚 *Hannigram* 🐚

The sun had set to sleep and the moon had rose to awaken when Will decided to swim up to Castiglioncello. He knew Hannibal had been busy recently, but every morning and night he would visit the beach and see if he was possibly there waiting for him. Ever time he was met with no one, he assured himself that Hannibal would come back to him again.

He always came back.

When he headed up this time around he was expecting to see no one. He did not know how long this whole school thing was for humans, so he was patient of course. He would not want Hannibal to feel any pressure to come see him. If Will could have his way, he would always be with Hannibal, but he was not that lucky.

Once he headed to the surface, he was greeted by candles. It was just once when Hannibal was there sitting down on the sand with candles around him. It was an unforgettable night of being so close to Hannibal when it was so late. Will had thought they would have kissed that night, but that was not a part of the universe's plan apparently.

Just like that night some time ago, Hannibal was sitting there on the sand and candles around him. Will was astonished to see the human, but he was just as merry about it.

"Hannibal!" Will exclaimed joyfully, swimming up closer to Hannibal, who was grinning in amusement seeing Will's reaction. "It's so good to see you."

Hannibal felt the same. The days he would not see Will, he made sure to keep a seashell or two in his pocket. Sometimes, he would just take one out and stare at it. Old and recent memories of the times he's spent with Will would just play on his head on repeat.

"I'm happy to see you too, Will. I'm sorry it has been some time." Hannibal wished there was some way he could have continued seeing him as much as he had in the past, but it was different now that he was an adult going to school and not a child.

"Don't apologize. It doesn't matter. All that matters is that you're here now." Will meant it. He would rather wait for Hannibal than to not have him return at all. "How has school been?"

"It's been going good, amico mio. Sooner than later, I will have my degree and I'll be able to actually take in patients." Hannibal said with excitement.

Will had learned a little bit of what Hannibal had decided to do when it came to school. Hannibal had rambled about it a few times here and there. Anything Hannibal talked about was interesting to Will even though he may not understand.

"So...you get to see a human every day?" Will had asked once.

"Well, when someone needs to sort out their problems. We endure things and that can leave a mark on us that affect our lives heavily . If someone needs to talk about it or is searching for a treatment, they can come to me about it." Hannibal explained to his mer friend .

Will awed, understanding bit by bit. "So like...if someone lost their parents and they needed someone to talk to they'd go to you?" Will thought of his friends and how he had even opened up to Hannibal long ago .

Hannibal nodded, smiling at the fact that Will was comprehending what he was talking about. "Yes, and sometimes tragedies can affect us and it won't affect us the same way. Sometimes its hard to sort out through your emotions and find the problem. A psychiatrist can help with that."

"I know you'll be the best psychiatrist, Hannibal. Anyone would be lucky to have you as theirs." Will still did not know everything psychiatry entailed, but he was confident in his words.

"Thank you, Will."

"I'm happy it has gone well for you, Hannibal, I'm proud of you. I bet your whole family is proud of you too." Will knew Simonetta and Chiyoh would definitely be proud of Hannibal. He had done so much and he was just continuing to be successful with his goals he had set for himself. Who would not be proud of him?

"I deeply appreciate your words, Will, and I'm glad to have made everyone I hold dear proud." Hannibal would love to have Will there with him celebrating with everyone else. "How have things in Primavera been?"

"The Queen and one of my dear friends got married. They're life mates now. Everyone is so happy about it." Will could not get Alana's words out of his head about him finding his life mate.

"Congrats to your friends. I don't doubt they're lucky to have each other." Hannibal expressed genuinely. He knew little about Will's friends. One thing he knew for certain about them was that they would not approve of him since he was a human.

There was a small silence, but all Will could think about was how last time at night Hannibal and he nearly kissed. He would not mind such a moment occurring once more.

"Hannibal?" Will thought of something.

"Hm?"

"Do you ever swim? I see a bunch of humans heading into the water to swim and even though I'm always in the water, I wondered if you do swim." It would probably be the closest thing of Hannibal being a part of Will's world. All Will could do was rest on the sand when he visited Hannibal.

Hannibal was quiet for a few moments. His downcast gaze made Will wonder if he had asked something wrong. "Mischa and I...we always used to, especially here in Castiglioncello. So many memories of us being happy...I haven't gone in the water since then."

Something I shouldn't have asked, Will thought dejectedly.

"Maybe...maybe one day I will again." Hannibal decided with a small smile. Will looked up at his human friend, smiling back. He wanted to be there for that moment.

The cerulean eyed merman would have made that suggestion if he did not feel a sharp tug on his tail. He thought a fish had bumped into his tail or something, but he was wrong when he felt the tug again. This time, the grip stayed on his tail and kept tugging.

Hannibal had noticed Will's fearful expression. He jumped when he saw Will clutch onto the sand. "Will!" Hannibal was about to grab Will and hold him, but he was too late.

Whoever was pulling his tail had enough of being soft and gave a sharper tug, causing Will to be dragged into the water. Will struggled and continued trying to grab onto the sandy ground, but it was futile.

"Will!" Hannibal got up from where he was sitting and followed Will, still hoping to grab his hand and pull him back.

When Will's body was mostly back in the water, he extended his hand out for Hannibal. "Hannibal!" He whimpered when Hannibal's hand nearly grabbed his, but their hands did not intertwine.

Will was successfully fully underwater and being pulled away from Castiglioncello. He could see Hannibal staring at the water with worry, likely debating whether to head in or not. Will wanted to swim back up and be with Hannibal. Who was dragging him back down?

The merman wheeled around and he froze.

It was Alana and Beverly's hand that had tugged at his tail. Beverly held onto his wrist just in case he decided to swiftly return to Hannibal. Then there was Jack, who was staring at him with disappointment and rage.

Will did not know who to look at first.

"Will, what were you thinking?!"

"You promised us. You promised you would never do it again."

"Oh Will...why..."

He could hear Alana and Beverly's voices, but he was still looking at Jack. All he could focus on was his adoptive father who was saying nothing. Will imagined that Jack would have plenty to say once they got back to Primavera.

Jack began swimming back towards the kingdom without any words. Will felt both his arms being dragged by Alana and Beverly. For one last time, Will turned his head towards the direction of Castiglioncello.

Towards Hannibal.

Chapter End Notes

Hope you enjoyed 💙💙💙

Quattordici

Bella gasped in fear when Jack threw a bunch of unknown objects onto their table. She backed away for a moment from seeing such foreign items. It looked exactly like the objects in Crazy Katherine's booth. She would never willingly go near there, but she has seen the stuff there. She only sold *human stuff* which was what she was looking at.

"Oh my...what-how...Jack, why are these things here?!" Bella shrieked.

Jack eyed Will who was across from them. "Alana, Beverly and I found Will on shore with a *human*." Bella cried out in fear, but Jack did not stop there. "And we found this little collection hidden away not too far from here."

Bella looked at Will. "Will! What is the meaning of this? Interacting with a human? Hoarding human items?"

Will was not anticipating for them to ever find out. Perhaps that was foolish of him. "I...Hannibal has been my friend for *years*."

"YEARS?!" Jack and Bella screamed.

Will shrunk back by their loud tone. "He's harmless. He'd never harm me or any mer. He's my friend. He's been giving me all this stuff. We're always careful so no human bothers us."

"Oh Will, are you crazy?!" Jack growled at the young mer. "You're not supposed to interact with humans! EVER! You know that! Your parents have told you and so have we."

Bella could not believe what she was hearing. "Out of all the mers, Will, I would have never expected you to go near a human."

"Why? Because my parents were killed by them?" Will snapped. He crossed hid arms. "Like I said, Hannibal would never. If he wanted to hurt me he would have done so long ago!"

Jack shook his head. "And we're not going to give him the chance to. Will, you're never supposed to the surface and see that human ever again."

"But Jack-"

"No buts, Will! Can't you see we're just trying to protect you?" Bella stared at Will sternly. "Why can't you see how dangerous humans are?"

"Not all of them are! Just like how not all mers are the best creatures alive! Mason was a horrible mer!" Will knew that everyone of Primavera was well aware of that.

Jack slammed his fists on the table. "ENOUGH WILL!" Will glared at the older merman. "You need to stop daydreaming about your human friend and the desire to go to the shore! I forbid you to ever go near humans ever again!"

Will opened his mouth to protest but Bella beat him to it. "Will, it's about time you've settled down! You're about old enough to mate."

The mer rolled his eyes. There was only one he would consider mating with. And this male happened to be a human.

"Marriage arrangements aren't so uncommon within us mers. Besides, Alana recommended-"

Will jumped right out of his skin. "Marriage arrangement?!" He did not like the sound of that.

"Alana and Margot have both noticed a particular merman that has found interest in you. He's the Magic Keeper of Primavera." Jack explained.

Will couldn't care less if the merman was the king of Primavera. Will's eyes were only set on Hannibal.

"Jack no!" Will protested.

Bella grabbed Will's hand. "There's no reason for you to be seeing that...that foul creature! That's what humans are!"

"It's done, Will!" Jack exclaimed fiercely before exiting the room.

Will watched as Bella followed Jack not a minute after. He sighed dejectedly.

What was he to do now?

🐚 ***Hannigram*** 🐚

It was early morning when Hannibal had headed off to the beach. He was sorrowful that when he arrived he did not see Will. He was worried since his dear friend was dragged away by other mers. Hannibal hoped that Will was perfectly fine.

Once Hannibal waited long enough and Will did not show up, he headed back to his mother's villa. Since he would not be seeing Will this morning this meant he would spend the day off the beach.

His "other life" was pleasant. He was grateful that his mother was healthy and well. He was a perfect student when it came to his studies. He would have the chance to study anywhere. He

had many friends here and there. None of them held the value that Chiyoh or Will held though.

When he came back home he was greeted by the sight of his mother sitting at the table by the window. He would drink tea with her at that table and they would talk. They would talk about anything. The one thing they never talked about was the two people they were missing.

Hannibal did not pressure her and he could tell she appreciated him for that.

His dear mother, Simonetta Lecter (neè Sforza) sat at the table with tea waiting. She smiled up at him as he approached the table.

"Buongiorno, amore." Simonetta greeted her beloved son. She brought her china teacup and lifted it up to her lips.

Hannibal took the seat across from her and greeted her softly. "Buongiorno, Mama." He took a teacup and poured some tea into it with the teapot.

Simonetta placed her cup in its saucer. "You're always heading to Castiglioncello. You never swim though. You always take something with you. Plenty of things, actually."

"I've not disturbed you, have I?" Hannibal hoped not. He always tried to be noiseless when he went to visit Will.

"No, you've not, figlio. If you're happy, I'm happy. You wouldn't visit the beach all this time if you didn't enjoy it." Simonetta took another sip from her tea.

Hannibal set his cup and saucer down at the table. "Mama, I feel like there is something you want to tell me, not that I don't enjoy your company or spending time with you."

Simonetta sighed and waited a moment before opening her mouth. "Your father used to be a good friend of Edward Du Maurier. Mr. Du Maurier has a daughter, she's your age."

Hannibal tilted his head but he could see where his mother was going with all of this. "Let me guess, Mama, Father and Mr. Du Maurier arranged their children to be married?"

Simonetta pursed her lips. "It was one of your father's last wishes." When Hannibal looked away, she placed a hand on the table. "I wish to see my son married and happy. I believe Miss Bedelia Du Maurier and you would be a fine match."

Hannibal frowned hearing that.

He thought a particular merman and he would have been a *perfect match*.

How could he deny his mother this wish of hers? It had been his father's wish too. Knowing it was something both of his parents wanted did not make it east for him. How could he say no?

Besides, it's not like the universe would let him have the one he truly wanted.

"I...I understand, Mama." Hannibal knew there was no other way. It meant letting go of something he wanted, but could he have ever had it anyway? "I accept this marriage arrangement."

Quindici

Chapter Summary

Dreams
Memories
Hope you enjoy the update 💙💙💙💙

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Bedelia was born and raised in America. She was interested in the psychological aspects of the human and therefore she studied it and pursued a career in it. She was a certified psychiatrist. Hannibal did think it was interesting to know someone else who had a similar interest as him. His mother had provided him all the information she could give him.

"Piacere, Hannibal." Bedelia greeted her to-be fiancé as she met him in the Florence Airport.

As gentlemanly as ever, Hannibal took Bedelia's hand and placed a kiss on top of her knuckles. "Piacere, Bedelia. I hope your flight from Maryland to Italy was well?"

Bedelia nodded. "It was fine. I've never been to Italy before." She clutched onto her large purse. "I would love it if you'd show me around, whenever you are free, of course. I know you're a busy man."

"I'd love to, Bedelia." Hannibal extended his arm for the woman to take. He would have wished for someone else to take his arm, but that would have never been possible. "I promise to show you around."

"Grazie, Hannibal." Bedelia thanked him and took his arm, following him closely as he led her out of the airport. "Are you free today?"

Hannibal would have said no, but it would have been lie. If he had been unaware of thus arrangement, he would have headed to Castiglioncello to see if Will showed up. However, it looked like there was a change of plans for him.

He had agreed to this and therefore he had to follow through with it. "Yes, I'm free today."

"Oh, great!" Bedelia exclaimed happily.

"I'll take you to the villa where you can set your things-" Hannibal was not expecting to be interrupted by the woman.

"Actually, I made arrangements elsewhere. Signora Lecter believed it would be best for us to wait until we're married to live together." Bedelia informed.

Hannibal did not know whether to feel surprised or relieved by this new information. "Very well. May I escort you to where you'll be staying?"

"Certo. I'm staying at the Villa Cora." Hannibal led Bedelia out of the airport and into the parking lot where his car was.

It was just silence during the whole drive. Hannibal usually would strike up a conversation, but Bedelia was not just any acquaintance of his. She was his future wife. She was a stranger and yet they were going to get married.

What was he supposed to say?

Hannibal refrained a sigh of relief once he arrived at the Villa Cora. Bedelia smiled at him. "I'll go check in and set my things inside and then I'll head back out. I won't be long." Bedelia grabbed her bags and then exited the car. Hannibal watched her go.

He fished out a little red velvet box that was inside his left pocket of his coat. Hannibal opened the box and was greeted by a sapphire engagement ring. It was a ring that had been in the Lecter family for a long time. It made sense to pass down a family heirloom like this.

Hannibal took out the ring and held it. What was he thinking years ago? Had marriage ever been on his young mind? Or perhaps it was the blind innocence that he would always have forever with someone not in the same world as he?

It was more painful to take in now. He doubted he had to think about it when he was just a child.

He was not a child anymore. He could not live blindly anymore either. There were things his mother wanted for him that he could not have with the one he wanted.

Someone else should be wearing this ring. He should be giving someone else it. Even if he did, the sapphire would never last underwater. All the shine would fade away.

He had barely spoken to Bedelia and he was dreading that he had to. Did he really think was all going to be easy? That he would just painlessly make it through pretending to feel something for Bedelia? He had fallen hard for someone else ergo the universe was going to make every bit of this torture for him.

Kissing Bedelia when all he wanted was the lips he nearly touched.

Holding Bedelia when all he wanted was to embrace Will's body of scales.

Loving Bedelia when all he desired was spending every moment of his life with a merman that had stolen his heart.

It wounded him thinking that for the rest of his life all he could do was imagine what he *could have* had with another. What had he done to be cursed by the universe? His father and

sister being taken from him and now he cannot be with the one he loved.

He was truly damned.

The blue of the sapphire was taunting him. It made him think of a pair of cerulean eyes that he loved. It was taunting him of the future he could have had. It reminded him that he had agreed to this agreement without any fight. It was a reminder that he could never have the one he wanted.

🐚 ***Hannigram*** 🐚

He sighed for what felt like the hundredth time. Right now he would have been at Castiglioncello talking to Hannibal. He had been spending a lot of time with his school and he would have discussed all he had learned. He would have brought one or two human objects with him because he always wanted Will to see something new because he would never get the chance to see it for himself.

Will did not even dare to look outside of his window since there was someone outside making sure he does not leave. Jack had asked Alana if he could borrow one guard to supervise Will. Although they had forbid him from heading to the surface, they did not want to give him any chances. Alana and Margot both agreed and now there was a merman guarding Will.

To be fair, Will was grateful the male was just outside his window and not inside the room with him. At some point he would have snapped at the innocent male to just leave him alone.

He could recall just this morning when they had left the guard with him.

Will sat on his bed, picking up one of the human objects he had yet put back in his collection. It was The Lovers tarot card. He had kept the whole deck, but he had kept this one with him. Sometimes, he would just look at it and remember what Hannibal told him about it.

Hannibal smiled and pointed at the card in Will's hands. "That's The Lovers. If it is upright it can mean love, harmony, relationships, values alignment and choice. If it is reversed, then it means self-love, disharmony, imbalance and misalignment of values."

Will eyed the human man and woman on the card. He had wondered why this one card out of the rest of them was so meaningful to him. Maybe it's because it made him think of the fact that he was in love with someone. Maybe he wished that somehow the universe would have let him be with the one he loved.

Could a tarot card have foreseen this future? To tell him that there was no way he could have the one he wanted because he was a merman?

The ill-fated part was that he was well aware. He knew that he was in love with Hannibal, his *human* friend. He knew that he wanted Hannibal to be his life mate. He was also aware that there was no way it could ever happen.

So why did it hurt so much now even though he had an idea that he was never going to have Hannibal? Should not it be less painful since he knew?

No, clearly being aware did nothing. If anything, the pain was more agonizing than the could have ever imagined.

"Will?" It was Margot.

Will hid the tarot card within the grass and glanced at the entrance of his room to see the mermaid. "Hi Margot. What brings you here?"

Margot swam towards him. "I know none of this...is ideal, but it had to be done. We're all worried about you, you know?"

Will had heard that a bunch of times. They probably thought he had gone crazy like Crazy Katherine. "I'm fine, Margot."

"Well, when a mer is obsessed with humans no one thinks they're fine." Margot took a seat right next to Will.

"Nothing ever happened." Those words were painful to say. True, he never got hurt by Hannibal or other humans, but what he wanted to happen never occurred either. "I...I was safe."

"Will, I know you say that but humans aren't- they can't be trusted. No matter how nice or innocent they seem." Margot was telling him everything he had heard from when he was young. It was the same thing all mers taught other mers.

Humans were dangerous no matter what.

"He was innocent." Will knew from the bottom of his heart and he could swear on his life that he knew that Hannibal would never hurt him. Even with such a swear, no mer would ever believe him.

Margot knew there was no way she could make him think different. She noticed how passionate he was in what he was saying. There was no hesitation in Will when he said his human friend would never hurt him. He truly believed it.

"Look even though you're forbidden to go up there, maybe come see us? We'd love you to meet Matthew soon." Margot said with a hopeful smile.

Oh yes, Matthew.

His arranged life mate.

"Maybe later..." Will whispered, turning away from Margot.

The mermaid was sad to see Will this way, but she was hopeful that he would see things differently soon. She opened her mouth to say something, but decided to let it go. Will would be fine. So, Margot quietly swam out of Will's room.

Once the mermaid queen was gone, Will took out the tarot card again and laid flat on his bed. He turned to his side while he continued staring at the card.

Why could that not be Hannibal and he?

He was lying on his back on the grainy warm sand. His cerulean eyes were staring up at the light blue sky where the clouds moved and the bright sun shone. Will was about to sit up from where he laid when he heard a small familiar chuckle .

In moments, the sun was blocked by someone. Hovering above him was a shirtless human man. His toned body made Will blush and the small tufts of hair on his chest made Will want to touch. It was like he had just opened his eyes for the first time when he saw maroon irises look back at him.

Hannibal was chuckling at him while adoringly staring at him. Will smiled being so close to the human. Hannibal leaned close, both of their bare chests now touching. Will just wanted to wrap his arms around Hannibal's neck and pull him into a kiss.

He was lost in Hannibal's gaze as the human caressed his face and leaned closer. Will closed his eyes when he felt it. Hannibal's lips were on his. Will kissed back passionately , not wanting to ever stop kissing him. Luckily, Hannibal had a gentle grip on his face, keeping him there for Hannibal to keep kissing him.

Once Hannibal pulled away, he stared down at Will, drinking in the sight. "I love you, Will. Tesoro mio, I will love you forever."

"I love you too, Hannibal." Will whispered , wanting to feel Hannibal's lips again. As he had wanted to, Will wrapped his arms around Hannibal and pulled him into a deep kiss.

It had felt as perfect as he thought it would be. All he had ever wanted and he had gotten it. He had Hannibal. Hannibal had him. They were together.

Hannibal broke away from the kiss and began leaving trails of kisses along Will's jawline to his neck.

"Hannibal...Hannibal..." Will melted in the passion and love he was feeling from the one he loved. "Hannibal..."

"Hannibal..." Will's eyes snapped open as he muttered the name of his intended. He looked at his hand to see he was holding on to The Lovers card still. He was still lying on his seagrasss bed in his home where he was being guarded.

It was a beautiful dream - all it could ever be.

How cruel could the universe be to show him such a beautiful moment he desired to experience with Hannibal? Did the world just want to keep torturing him? Did it keep

wanting to remind him of all he could never have?

Will sniffled as he curled up on his bed. His hand still holding onto the card securely.

All he wanted was to be with Hannibal.

Chapter End Notes

I keep hurting Will and Hannibal🥲🥲🥲

Sedici

Chapter Summary

Hey guys here's another update! So, I had posted an authors note of taking down this story because I started seeing some flaws here and there and I kind of panicked for some reason, but a comment kind of calmed me down and gave me motivation. So I don't know if I'll finish this by the end of the year but that's okay because I finished TOO like I wanted to and that's okay I'm proud of myself for that. And it's fine if I don't finish this once since I had just started writing it. Either way, I'm keeping it up and I will be updating it when an update is ready. I want to thank you all for your comments, reads and kudos I deeply appreciate it 💙💙💙💙💙💙💙💙

Chapter Notes

So one flaw of mine was my lack of knowledge of the distance between Florence and the beach Castiglioncello. So I've never been to Italy so all my knowledge is pure research and I thought that Florence and Castiglioncello were close - well, you can drive from Florence to Castiglioncello but it would take about an hour to get there. So that made no sense for the story because apparently Simonetta's villa was supposed to be near the beach or it would take clearly not an hour to get there because young Hannibal walked back and forth his mother's home to the beach to meet up with Will.

Livorno is a town that is pretty near Castiglioncello - 30 minutes to get to and from based on my research and I thought that was closet and although that's not ten minutes it's closer than the hour between Florence and Castiglioncello. So, Simonetta's villa is in Livorno (as well as the Pazzi's). Florence is still a city the Lecter's keep close to their hearts as they always visited the city and Hannibal still loves that city and wishes to show Will around of course.

I think that was the major flaw I found because I'm unfamiliar with Florence and I looked up "Florence beaches" and that's how I found out about Castiglioncello and what it looked like but I failed to see the distance between the two. So yeah hopefully that clears things up. I'll be going through chapters to edit it to make sure it now fits perfectly, grazie💙💙💙💙💙😅

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Will never thought in a million years that he would end up heading to the palace to spend his entire day. Jack and Bella thought it would be for the best of him to do so in order to spend time with his future life mate.

There were only a few things Will knew about Matthew, the Magic Keeper of Primavera.

One, he and his family were the magic keepers of Primavera for a very long time.

Two, his name is Matthew.

And then three, Alana and Margot figured out that Matthew had some interest in him. That was all.

Will had no memory of ever meeting Matthew before. He rarely visited the castle especially after Alana became a queen to Primavera too. She preferred meeting outside of the palace too. It just felt more natural to her that way.

"Hi Will." Alana greeted her friend as he entered the palace. She was there waiting for him. "How have you been?"

Will felt relieved that Alana had not been there yesterday for the big lecture Jack and Bella had planned for him. He figured Alana would have her own words for him, but she seemed quite relaxed. Perhaps she was waiting for a different time to scold him.

"I've been good, Alana. How about you?" He was not doing good at all. He would rather be somewhere else, but he was forbidden to.

Alana must have sensed the lie due to her forced smile. "I've been well too. I'm guessing you're here to meet Matthew?" Everyone had been waiting for this very moment. Jack and Bella wanted him over for dinner after they met.

Will nodded. "Yup." He was not enthusiastic about it at all. "When did he even know of me?"

"Well, he is aware of the friends I have. He has asked about you before. I think he saw you exit the palace once. He told Margot he was deeply intrigued by you. When we told him that no one has approached you yet, he seemed joyous." Alana explained thoroughly.

Will tried to not think about the pain in his heart, so he listened to what Alana was telling him. It was still hard to think that the mer they were arranging him to be with was someone he had never met before.

"He also saw you at our wedding. He told Margot that you were as breathtaking as a pearl. It was hard for him to believe you were not taken." Alana said with a small chuckle.

Matthew's *breathtaking as a pearl* did not cause the same effect as the time Hannibal called him *gorgeous.* Will even blushed a bit remembering Hannibal saying that to him.

"I think he will be good for you, Will." Alana finally stopped once they got towards an entrance towards a room.

Will crossed his arms. "What makes you think that?"

"Well, for one, he really is interested. And second, he's not some arrogant mer either. He is also the keeper of the magic in Primavera."

Will wondered if they thought he would replace his interest with humans and their items with the magic of Primavera and its keeper.

Alana did not wait for Will to respond. Instead, she entered the room, Will following close behind. This room was unlike the rest of the rooms in the palace. It was a wide room with a bunch of shelves. The shelves were full of little jars and bottles and little things Will did not know were.

At the center of the room there was a giant clamshell that was wide open. Right next to the clamshell was a merman with a sangria colored tail. He had fair skin and short black hair and light eyes. He was a handsome merman, Will could admit.

"Will, this is Matthew, Matthew this is Will." Alana gestured at them both. She knew this was going to likely be awkward, but the two had to meet at some point.

Matthew swam away from the giant clamshell and approached the two, his eyes glued to Will. He stared at Will as if he was the most interesting thing in the entire ocean.

"I'm so happy to meet you, Will." Matthew began. Alana sent a hopeful smile at Will, hoping he would be cordial towards his arranged life mate. "I know this is all so sudden, but I swear on my life to be the best life mate ever."

Will did not know if he should appreciate Matthew's words or not. He did not want them, but he had no say in the matter. Should he just let go of what he loved and just settle?

"It's nice to meet you too, Matthew." Will would have taken his hand for the merman to shake, but only humans did that.

Alana cleafed her throat. "Well, I'm going to leave. I will see you both later. Have fun, you too." When she looked at Will, her friend looked away. With a sigh, she swam out.

"So Will, what would you like to do today?" Matthew asked him, swimming back to the giant clamshell.

Will was curious enough and followed Matthew. "I'm spending the day with you so...I guess whatever you want to do."

"I can tell you some stuff about the magic of Primavera." Matthew suggested. Will just nodded, giving Matthew all he needed to continue. "It's a big responsibility. Not any mer is allowed to have access to magic, only the royals and I. Can't have random mers causing trouble."

Will wondered aloud. "What kind of trouble?"

"Any type. You'll find there are spells for *everything*." Matthew explained, picking up a strand of seaweed from the inside the clamshell. "There are only three rules when it comes to magic. One, bringing someone back from the dead, two, becoming and three, unlimited powerful magic user and making someone fall in love."

Will thought it was nice that there were things no one ever had to worry about. He was glad mers were not making other mers fall in love with them by force. He wondered how someone would even be able to break a spell like that.

Bringing back the dead made him think of his parents and Hannibal's father and Mischa. It seemed like there was nothing he could do there.

Hannibal, of course, always had to take over his mind.

"Will?" Will blinked at Matthew. He had gotten too lost in his thoughts while Matthew was rambling.

"S-sorry, Matthew."

"You were thinking about your human friend, weren't you?" Matthew asked. Will was a tiny bit surprised that Matthew knew about that. He thought that was something that would have been kept from Matthew so there would be no scaring him off.

Will looked down. "Y-yeah..."

"Don't be ashamed about it. We all have what we are fascinated with." Matthew said as if it was the least of Will's problems. "I know everyone else wasn't happy to hear about it though, were they?"

"They were *enraged*." Will could still see their faces and hear their voices. "They forbid me from heading up there ever again. First thing they did was trap me."

Matthew was silent for a moment before looking down into the empty clamshell. He glanced up at Will. "You know, the magic of Primavera is unstoppable. It can do so much. It can make a mer's hair longer if they wish. It can make a mer happy. It can even..." Will watched as Matthew got closer to him, eyeballing his tail. "...give a mer *human legs*."

Will gasped.

Was Matthew saying what he thinks he's saying?

"No...that's impossible..." Will could not believe it. He would not believe it. There was no way that was possible.

Matthew grinned at him. "Yes, Will, it's true." He gently intertwined his tail with Will, who was lost in his own thoughts and not focused. "If your heart so desires to see your human friend, all you need is a pair of human legs. This magic can make that happen."

He would have human legs.

He would be able to walk on land.

Everything he thought would never be possible with Hannibal it could all happen if he had human legs. If only he was a part of his world and some spell or potion will make that happen.

"Really?" Will still could not believe it.

Matthew removed his tail and swam to face the front of Will. He grabbed the merman's hand. "So, what do you say, Will? Would you like a pair of human legs?"

It took Will a moment.

If he had human legs he would never want to return. He would be saying goodbye to his family here and friends. The life he knew in the ocean would be no more. He would have to say goodbye to his tail for good and get used to saying hello to his legs every day.

He was doing it for Hannibal. All to be with Hannibal.

"Yes." Will answered.

Matthew laughed loudly and moved around the room. He picked a few jars and bottles, throwing the contents into the clamshell. Will observed with intrigue. There was colorful smoke emanating from the clamshell.

Will could not wait to reunite with Hannibal.

🐚 ***Hannigram*** 🐚

"Will is probably mad at us for telling Jack and Bella about everything." Jimmy tried to reason with Beverly as they entered the palace.

Brian chipped in with what Jimmy was saying. "Jimmy has a point, Beverly."

Beverly rolled her eyes at the two. "Yeah, you're probably right, but I think now is the best time to apologize. We were doing the right thing, but it just..."

"It didn't feel like it." Brian finished her sentence.

Beverly stopped to look at Brian and Jimmy, nodding at Brian's words. "We were doing it to protect him. I know that. Seeing him look at us when we caught him...he looked so heartbroken. As if we were the ones causing his world to crumble or something."

It was hard for them to look at Will for many reasons. The main reason being that he was so intrigued by a human to accept gifts from it and to see it willingly. Ultimately, they felt guilty because they knew the uproar Will would receive from everyone else.

"I still think it's a bit crazy they arranged him with someone." Jimmy said with a displeased expression. "I mean, come on. At least let him pick his life mate."

Weirdly enough, Beverly wanted to tell Jimmy, *"He already has,"* but who would she be referring to? The human that Will kept seeing? Even if that was true, the human had given gifts to Will and that was a big part of the mer mating ritual process. Did the human even know about the mating rituals?

So many questions and no answers.

"Yeah, I agree." Beverly was not happy with that decision Jack and Bella had made. "Will doesn't even know this Matthew."

Brian scoffed. "Do any of us? He's the Magic Keeper of the kingdom, yet I think I've only seen him twice."

"Well, Alana says he's always been in the palace, but he keeps to himself. Either way, that doesn't mean that he's the one for Will." Jimmy informed Brian.

"Life mates should be picked, not arranged." Beverly muttered as they swam further into the palace. They went in a few rooms and made turns until they neared a room where pink, blue and purple smoke were coming out from.

"What is happening in there!?" Brian whisper-shouted.

"Uhm...potion making?" Jimmy suggested.

Beverly did not have a good feeling about this. "Come on!" The three of them entered the room, engulfed by the smoke.

Once the smoke cleared away, they saw Will right there near Matthew and the clamshell. In Will's hand was a little bottle with glowing pink liquid. Beverly was too busy wondering why Will had the bottle in his hand, too late when her friend brought the bottle to his lips and drank the liquid.

"Will!" Beverly shouted, hoping to stop her friend. It was too late. Will had drained all that was in the little bottle. He dropped the empty bottle and it slowly fell to the floor.

The four mers eyed Will as things were staring to happen. There was a light surrounding Will, but the most intriguing thing was what was happening to his tail. There was light surrounding the tail, but it began slowly moving on its own. Will winced in pain.

Beverly looked at Matthew. He was the magic keeper. "What did you do to him!?"

Matthew smiled as he watched Will. "Do not worry. Everything is going as it should. This sadly will be a painful process."

Beverly ignored Matthew and swam towards Will, seeing if there was any way she could help. What kind of potion did Matthew give him?

"Beverly, look!" Jimmy exclaimed.

Beverly eyed Will's tail and she could see now why Will was wincing in pain. His tail was slowly being pulled a part. Will screamed once there were two parts of his tail. Strangely, the two limbs were changing to look different. There was no scales, just flesh. The bottoms of the limbs looked similar to hands too.

"You must take him to the surface. He will not survive underwater now that he's drunken that potion." Matthew instructed, his eyes of concern.

From what it sounded like to Beverly, Matthew had turned Will into a human, but that could not be it.

"BEVERLY, COME ON!" Brian shouted as he and Jimmy swam towards them. Beverly glared at Matthew before the three of them grabbed Will and started swimming up to the surface.

They were trying to go as fast as they could. According to Matthew, Will could not survive under the water right now and no matter what they were not letting their friend drown.

Once they made it to the surface, Will breathed heavily to get air into his lungs. He coughed lightly as he was guided away from Primavera. He was not the great swimmer like all mers right now since he did not have his tail. With legs, he would not be able to swim like a mer.

"Oh Will, what did you get yourself into." Beverly sighed as the three of them slowly made it closer to shore. It was the same exact one where they had found Will with his human friend.

Once Will was close enough, he crawled over to the sand. He pushed away any strands from his face and stared down at where his tail once was. Replacing his tail were two human legs. He had legs! Just like Hannibal!

"I have legs..." Never in a million years would he ever think he would get to experience what it was like to have human legs.

"They're weird things." Jimmy said as he gently poked Will's right foot.

Beverly shook her head in disbelief. "Will, why did this happen? Not long ago we caught you with your human friend and now today we catch Matthew giving you some random potion which gave you human legs!"

"What do you think happened, Beverly? Isn't it obvious?" Brian sighed and studied Will as he admired his legs. "Pretty Boy decided to get human legs so he could go be with his human friend."

Jimmy gasped. "Will, tell us that's not true!"

Will was not even paying attention to what the three of them were saying. "Hmm?"

"He's not even listening!" Brian groaned.

"Will, why do you have human legs?" Beverly asked, not watching as Brian complained to Jimmy.

Will supposed there was no point in hiding the truth now that he had human legs. "I want to see him again. We're both from different worlds and now...now we're not."

Beverly was confused. "Why would that matter though? You two are just friends. Why would you desperately go to this length just to-" She stopped when she realized. Jimmy and Brian had even turned to look at them.

It all made sense to her now.

"You...you love him." Beverly stated.

"WHAT?!" Jimmy and Brian said in unison.

Will looked away due to the attention on him. "You wouldn't understand. We can't be together. The universe has made it that we cannot be together."

"You ever think there's a reason why? Maybe you're not supposed to be together?" Beverly suggested. When she saw the sadness on Will's face, she felt guilty. "Look Will, you're not a human. It...it's just not possible."

Will argued. "Why not? I have human legs now just like him! Why can't it work?" If this potion was permanent he could be with Hannibal. Everything would work out.

They would never have to just meet for the summer. They would finally get to see each other all the time.

It was all he had ever wanted.

"Come on, Will. You know this isn't good. This is a very bad plan." Brian tried being reasonable. The three of them could see how convinced Will was that it would all somehow work out.

Jimmy eyed Will's human legs. "You don't know how to act like a human! How, even with human legs, would this work?"

"Hannibal has taught me things. I wouldn't be clueless." Will said, fidgeting with his hands.

Beverly looked at him like he was crazy. "He has *taught* you things? As if giving you human items wasn't enough!"

"I can't believe how long it has been going on. We heard Jack telling Alana that the friendship has been going on for *years*." Jimmy said incredulously.

"For years, you've been meeting up with a human." It was even hard for Beverly to believe that as Brian said it. This whole time, Will had made a human friend and whenever he was

free (and not with his friends) he was with the human on the beach.

Beverly knew everyone would be furious to find out that Matthew had given Will a potion that would give him human legs. "Let's just go back home, Will, and fix this problem. Jack and Bella will probably have the arrangement severed since Matthew enabled you by giving you human legs."

"No." Will replied sternly at Beverly who was already making her way back into the water. "I want to see him."

"Will-"

"No!" Will had enough of it. He had enough of them telling him it was a bad idea and that he had to give this up. "You don't get it. This is all I've ever wanted. You know I love him. I have loved him for so long. This is the only chance I'll ever get. I can't let it go to waste. I *won't*."

Beverly would have said something, but the pained look on her friend's face was enough for her. She saw how Margot and Alana were together and Jimmy and Brian. Of course she wanted the same for Will too.

She had never heard of a mer falling in love with a human before. Beverly had no way of knowing how this would end for Will, but she hoped that he would be safe and happy.

She supposed what had been done had been done. "I...I guess so." Brian and Jimmy turned to her as if thinking she was telling a joke.

"You guys can't go back and tell anyone, okay?" Will asked, looking at the three of them. "You must promise not to."

Beverly bit her lip, but her heart was telling her to listen to Will. "Okay, we promise."

"Beverly!" Brian was not thrilled about this arrangement at all. "It's not safe! We should go back and-"

Beverly raised her hand up to hush Brian. "No, it's gonna be fine. Will knows his human friend - who BETTER not hurt you. Besides, we can't go with him, but we'll be here waiting for him no matter what happens."

Will smiled at her. "Thank you, Beverly. You guys don't know how much this means to me."

"Well, now that you got your human legs, what now? Are you just supposed to go find your human?" Beverly was looking around the beach. If anything, they were just lucky that no one was there.

"Humans wear clothes and...I don't have any..." Will said timidly.

Brian wrinkled his nose. "Where are you supposed to get human clothes?"

Will shrugged. "I'm not sure..."

Jimmy scoffed. "And you claim your dear human taught you something." The merman yelped when Beverly smacked his arm.

"Signor! Signor!" A random female's voice was heard nearby. Safely assuming it was a human, Will watched his three friends jump back into the water to not be seen.

Will turned to his right to see a woman making his way towards him. He sighed in relief realizing the big rock near him had covered where his three friends had been. The young woman was dressed in red and her dark brown hair flowed down her shoulders.

"Oh my!" The woman exclaimed once she was standing there only a few feet away from Will. "Signor, you're...you're naked..."

Will stared at her in embarrassment. He wished Hannibal was here. His human friend would know exactly what to do.

"Signor, are you lost? Where are you from?" The woman questioned, but Will had no answers. She studied him for a moment as she held the white thing that was over her arm. It looked like the towel Hannibal always sat on when he visited sometimes.

"Lecter...I'm looking for a Hannibal Lecter." It was all Will could think of saying. He wanted to find his human friend it was the very reason why he had human legs. Surely this woman would be able to help.

The woman hummed. "The last name rings a bell." She observed Will for a moment before extending her hand to give Will the white towel. "Here, signor, since you have no clothes."

Will took the white towel and wrapped it around himself. He was already feeling so embarrassed since he had been so unprepared. He wondered what this human woman thought of him. She probably thought he was crazy.

"If you want I can help you track down your friend?" The woman offered with a hopeful smile.

Will nodded his head happily. He would not know where to even start searching for Hannibal. He said his mother's villa was not so far from Castiglioncello, but Will would not know which direction to head off.

"Y-yes, I'd appreciate that a lot, signora." Will thanked the woman. He could never address the mermen and mermaids with such titles. They would know something was up. However, Hannibal had taught him a few things.

The woman extended her hand out for Will to take. Trying his best to stand up, Will grabbed the woman's hand even though his legs wobbled. The woman seemed to notice this.

"Are your legs tired?" The woman questioned when Will took a step and nearly fell onto the sand. Luckily, she had taught him before he could.

Will could not just say, "*Actually I've never had legs before,"* to the woman. He simply agreed in a nonverbal manner by just nodding along with what she was saying.

"Okay well, I got you, don't worry." The woman reassured Will as she led him away from where he was. His legs were still pretty weak since they had never been used before.

Will turned his head to look back to where his friends were. He smiled when he saw Beverly, Jimmy and Brian bring their heads to the surface. He sent them a small wave and he could see in their hopeful eyes that they were only wishing the best for him on his new journey.

He was just as hopeful.

Chapter End Notes

Hope you all enjoyed and until the next update 💙💙💙🐚🐚🐚🐚

Diciasette

Chapter Summary

> Here's another update!! Hope you all had an awesome Christmas Eve and Christmas Day with your family and friends or spending time doing other holiday traditions 🥰🥰🥰💙💙💙💙💙💙💙💙💙

Allegra grabbed a blanket from the closet and wrapped it around the curly-haired man named "Will." She left the room where Will was sitting patiently, his hands clinging onto the blanket she had given him. She stepped into the kitchen where she pulled out her phone and dialed a number.

It was about four rings when the other line picked up.

"Allegra? Are you okay, amore?" Her husband, Rinaldo, who worked as an inspector replied back.

Allegra was happy enough to simply hear her husband's voice, but there were more important things. "Caro, I was walking on the beach just moments ago and I found this man...he was all alone and *naked*."

"You did not go near him, right? He could be mad in the head, Allegra." Rinaldo sounded concerned for his wife.

Allegra gasped. She was not thrilled about what her husband said. "Don't say such things! I don't don't he's wrong in the head. He mentioned he has a friend. A *Hannibal Lecter*." She grinned since she knew her husband would recognize the name within seconds.

"Lecter? Signora Simonetta! That's her son. We just met him for dinner not long ago." Allegra had already recalled, but she was going to let her husband know about this. He would know what to do. "He's certain he's talking about a Hannibal Lecter?"

"Certo! He said he was looking for a Hannibal Lecter. It sounded serious and I can see on his face he probably knows who Signor Lecter is." Allegra turned around to make sure Will was still where she left him.

Rinaldo hummed. "What was his name?"

"He says its just Will." Allegra had tried asking to be certain, but all she had gotten in response was a first name. "He gave nothing else. His name and the name of the one he's looking for."

"I'll give Signora Simonetta a call so she can pass the message to her son. He could possibly just be a friend. I don't know why he'd be at the beach naked, but we'll let them handle that. If there's any problems, they'll just call us back." Rinaldo explained.

Allegra nodded. "Very well. I'll keep him here until further notice."

"Grazie, amore."

Allegra put away her phone and eyed Will. For now, she would not bother him. Besides, someone would come for him soon.

Hopefully.

🐚 *Hannigram* 🐚

It had just been yesterday that she had arrived in the beautiful Florence, Italy. All she knew of it was everything Hannibal had told her about it. She was never afraid to travel the world, but her loyalty was the the Lady Murasaki. She would be there by her side until the elegant woman told her not to anymore.

Chiyoh had lived a wonderful life with the Lady Murasaki and her husband Robert Lecter. The château Robert owned was luxurious and spacious. Even though she was a maid, Chiyoh got the best of everything. Her room was large and one she could call her own. Robert was always respectful towards her, including Hannibal who advocated that being rude towards someone was unnecessary.

She wished she would have gotten to know Mischa. When Hannibal talked about her it was of sweet memories that she knew made him sad. Even Robert had memories of his little niece. Lady Murasaki did not know Mischa much, but it was obvious how much the little girl meant to the Lecter family. Chiyoh believed she would have wanted to meet Mischa too if she had the chance.

It had been not even a full day since she has arrived and yet Chiyoh was enjoying herself. She did not mind helping Simonetta around the villa. She felt it gave her something to do. She had grown accustomed since she had been Lady Murasaki's maid for years. Chiyoh was excited when she could see more of Florence. She had time though. She enjoyed being around Simonetta's presence. In many ways, she could see where Hannibal got his traits from her.

Chiyoh was getting the la camomilla prepared and placing the teacups and tea kettle on the tray when a ring was heard throughout the entire villa. She would have gone to answer it, but she heard Simonetta's voice. Chiyoh continued with the tea and once she was finished, she exited the kitchen and headed into the lounge room.

Simonetta was sitting on one of the velvet eggplant colored lounge chairs where the phone was resting on the table nearby. "Is that so? Well, thank you for telling me, Signor Pazzi."

Chiyoh neared the table and two chairs that were near the window. She gently placed the tray on the table. Even though she was on the lounge chair now, Simonetta loved having a single place where to drink tea.

"Chiyoh?" Simonetta rose from her seat and headed towards the tea.

"Yes, Signora Simonetta?" Chiyoh had originally referred to her as *Signora Lecter,* but Simonetta had insisted she just refer to her as Simonetta. It was informal that way and the woman said they were basically family.

Simonetta took a seat at one of the chairs. "A man has claimed to be a friend of Hannibal's. Do you mind heading over to the Pazzi's? I guess Hannibal has made a new friend."

Chiyoh had heard of one of Hannibal's *friends*, a Franklyn Froideveaux, who seemed to be quite attached to Hannibal even though he stuck close with another friend named Tobias Budge. Hannibal was not rude and would not ignore or just tell Franklyn to "*Screw off,"* since he had manners. Still, Hannibal would rather spend time with other acquaintances than Franklyn.

"I'll head over there, Signora. Maybe we can invite this friend of Hannibal's over for dinner?" Chiyoh was interested in meeting Hannibal's friends. She was curious of those he trusted to see him completely.

Simonetta nodded. "Sí, I think that would be a great idea. Grazie, Chiyoh." Chiyoh nodded at the older woman, pouring a cup of tea for both of them.

🐚 ***Hannigram*** 🐚

Right after sipping on one cup of tea, Chiyoh left the Lecter Villa and headed to the Pazzi's. Chiyoh knew very little about the couple. She knew there was Rinaldo and Allegra Pazzi, who were a kind couple that Simonetta did not mind having over for dinner.

Luckily, the Pazzi's did not live too far away from them. It was about a ten minute walk when Chiyoh was at the Pazzi's. Simonetta had given her the directions to the villa before she had headed out. Once Chiyoh was at the front door, she gently knocked twice.

"Coming!" She heard a woman's voice from behind the other side of the two. Chiyoh waited patiently and smiled when the door opened and she was greeted by a young woman. "Hello."

"Hello, you must be Allegra Pazzi. Nice to meet you, I am Chiyoh, Signora Simonetta's maid. I've come for this friend of Hannibal's." Chiyoh was relieved when Allegra nodded.

"I'm so happy someone is here for him. I would hate for him to be all alone. My husband thinks he could possibly be a bit odd, but I don't judge a book by its cover." Allegra explained, moving away from the doorway for Chiyoh to enter the villa.

Chiyoh turned to Allegra. "If you don't mind, may I speak to him alone for a moment?"

"Yes, of course." Allegra said, pointing at lounging room where the man was. She closed the door and headed to the kitchen.

Slowly, Chiyoh entered the lounging room and took in the strange man. He was an attractive man with his wild dark curls, blue eyes and fair skin. She noticed how out of place he looked. He was dressed casually, but there was something more. He kept staring at every little thing in the room.

It was like he was seeing everything for the first time. She reminded him of a young child. One who had been sheltered inside a home for a long time and now was having the chance to see the world.

"Hello, I'm Chiyoh." Chiyoh walked in front of the man. He glanced up at her, his eyes widened as he studied her.

"Chiyoh..." The man muttered as if it was hard for him to believe that she was actually there in front of him. It was odd since Chiyoh had never met this man in her entire life.

She cleared her throat, ignoring her curiosity. "Yes. What is your name?"

"My name is Will." The man introduced himself. "You're here...here in Italy. He said you'd one day visit and see how beautiful Florence was."

Chiyoh raised an eyebrow. "Hannibal said that?" Of course she knew that. She was always a bit sad to see him leave during the summers, but she was always glad when he returned. She loved hearing him talk about his summers in Florence. She did promise him that she would see it one day and now here she was.

Still, Chiyoh was not too convinced. She still knew nothing about this friend of Hannibal's. She could not remember obe friend of his he did not talk about to her. A Will has never been brought up before.

Perhaps this man did not know Hannibal at all...or, this was someone Hannibal kept all to himself.

Chiyoh's thoughts were interrupted when Will asked. "How are you liking Florence so far? Do you prefer it over Paris?"

"I haven't seen much of it yet." Chiyoh replied truthfully. "Look, it was quite sudden hearing of you. To be honest, I don't know if I trust you. Or how I feel about you."

"What do you mean?"

Chiyoh crossed her arms. "Sometimes people just bother Hannibal. He's got this one friend who sometimes coincidentally shows up wherever he is."

Will winced. "That friend sounds odd."

"Yes, and I'd like to make sure you're not the same." *Hannibal is important to me*, she nearly added. "I don't know to trust you or not."

Will scoffed, whispering loud enough. "I wonder how Mischa would have thought about me."

To Chiyoh, time froze. She was not anticipating that name to pour from Will's mouth. Chiyoh had never heard of Will before, but he knew of *her*. Hannibal had let those locked doors open for this man. There were only a few, but they were only people Hannibal kept close to him.

So who was Will really?

"You know...you know about Mischa?" Chiyoh asked. Will glanced up, his eyes wide as an owl, probably not expecting Chiyoh to have caught his words.

It's not like he could take it back now. "He loves his sister more than anything, or..."

"He *did*." Chiyoh finished his sentence. He knew Hannibal only let people he loved deeply within his true being. She always hoped one day he would find someone that he could find that undying happiness with. "Florence is full of memories. It's a beautiful place because of the past laughter and smiles it carries."

Will smiled sadly. "Hannibal and Mischa's." Chiyoh nodded at him, the same devastation on her face. "She may gone, and so is Hannibal's father but...their memory still lives. Signora Simonetta let's their memory live on within her every day life."

Chiyoh gasped. Will even knew about Simonetta too? How much had Hannibal told him? "She's a heartbroken wide and mother."

"I couldn't imagine having to live with that tragedy." Will let his head hang, avoiding eye contact. "Still, Hannibal needs her."

Chiyoh was confused. "Hannibal will always need his mother."

"No, I mean...she thought it was best to send him to live with his uncle and aunt. It was not the worst decision in the world. He loves them and *you* too." Chiyoh could not help her eyes becoming a bit watery from Will's words. "Being a child without his mother couldn't have been easy for him."

Chiyoh was aware of why Simonetta wanted Hannibal living with his uncle and aunt. She knew Simonetta's depression at the time was too much for her. She was a heartbroken soul and she grieved for the husband and daughter she lost. Chiyoh wondered if she would have ever considered taking her own life to reunite with those she lost. Perhaps she did not Hannibal to ever see her get to that point if she did?

It did make Chiyoh sad knowing that she would not have had great memories with her best friend if Simonetta did not send him to live in France.

"You really do know him." Chiyoh muttered softly. How come Hannibal kept Will a secret? "Does he know you as much as you know him?"

"He does." Will replied, remembering he had told Hannibal about the death of his own parents. They had both let each other in since long ago.

Chiyoh sighed. Will was Hannibal's friend or someone he cared for deeply. She was curious, therefore she was definitely going to be questioning Hannibal about it later.

"Come on, Will." Chiyoh helped Will out from the chair. She led him out of the room and towards the door. "Thank you, Allegra."

Allegra had stepped out of the kitchen to watch them leave. "Be careful," she said with a small wave.

Once they were outside, Chiyoh began leading Will near the direction of Lecter Villa.

"Where are we going?" Will questioned.

Chiyoh smirked. "Signora Simonetta wanted to invite you over for dinner. Hannibal should be coming home soon too."

Will become excited. He was finally going to reunite with Hannibal.

He was going to see the one his heart raced for.

🐚 ***Hannigram*** 🐚

"Ciao, Bedelia." Hannibal said as he waved at his future wife.

Bedelia gave him a short nod and smile. "Ciao, Hannibal." She turned away and headed into her hotel. Hannibal observed her for a moment before heading towards his parked car.

He felt his heart ache of how he was spending his day with Bedelia when he could be elsewhere. He had grown accustomed of being surrounded by sand and hearing the splashing of the waves at Castiglioncello. Of course, he had gotten used to the merman that was always there waiting for him too.

Lunch with Bedelia was not so bad. He had taken her to some of his favorite places, especially the Uffizi Gallery. His mother also wanted him to carry along with the engagement plans, so he had proposed to Bedelia at the Piazza della Signoria which was next to the Uffizi Gallery. It was the perfect, romantic spot and anyone would think that any couple there were in love and destined to be together.

Bedelia had been astonished by it, but she knew Hannibal would have had to pop the question at some point. Of course she had said yes and appeared as the happiest woman alive. Hannibal nearly wished his mother could have seen it.

Simonetta would know her son is getting married, but not that her son's heart was stolen by someone else.

Perhaps it was best he did it without her around.

When he got back home, he eyed the directions to Castiglioncello. He would have loved to given Will a proper farewell. Hannibal was unsure where his wife and he were even going to live. They had not made that discussion, but even if they stayed in Florence, why would Hannibal still go to Castiglioncello?

His heart belonged to Will and he had seen throughout many times that Will wanted him too. Perhaps continuing to see his beloved merman would only cause pain to them both? Hannibal would hate to harm Will in any way.

"Mama, Chiyoh, I'm home!" Hannibal announced as he entered the villa, opening, entering and closing the door.

"Figlio!" Simonetta smiled upon seeing her son. Hannibal saw Simonetta questioned Chiyoh sitting at the table drinking tea. "How was your day with Bedelia?"

Hannibal forced a smile. "It was a good day. I proposed to her at the Piazza della Signoria."

Simonetta put her hands over her mouth, her eyes getting watery. "Oh, figlio! I'm so happy." She took his hands in hers. "We must celebrate! An engagement party for the both of you would be perfect, hmm?"

"It would be lovely." Hannibal said.

Simonetta carried on sipping her tea, giving Chiyoh the chance to place her teacup on its saucer. "There is a surprise for you, Hannibal."

"A surprise?"

Chiyoh grinned. "It's in your room. I think you'll like it." Hannibal would have gotten her to elaborate more, but she turned away from him.

His curiosity got the better of him and he was exiting the room and making it to his own room. Releasing a deep breath, he grabbed his doorknob and opened the door.

Sitting right there on his bed was the one he had desired to see for days. Those curls he wanted to tug. The cerulean eyes he wanted to drown in. His beloved merman he desired to spend the rest of his days with was sitting on his bed.

Except, his merman had legs...

"Will?"

Diciotto

Chapter Summary

Here's another update my dear readers 💙💙💙💙💙💙

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Maroon was all he could see when the door opened. The eyes he loved staring into were staring right back at him. He almost shied away from those eyes, but he had not seen them in some time. How could he resist? All he had wanted was to look into those eyes once more. He had wanted to see Hannibal.

"Will...?" Hannibal called out to him. Will smiled shyly at him. "It's...it's really you..." Hannibal walked away from the door and towards the bed where the former merman sat.

Will beamed at Hannibal's reaction towards him being here. Evidently, Hannibal was thrilled, if not in disbelief, that he was here. Will could understand why he would be perplexed. Hannibal has only ever known Will with a tail. Like him, he probably had no clue that Primavera's magic could change things.

The cerulean eyed male got up and walked towards Hannibal, a bit weakly since he was still getting the hang of his legs. Hannibal had placed his arms around Will to assist him.

"I'm so happy to see you too." Will admitted, looking into those maroon eyes he loved. "I missed you."

Hannibal smiled. "I have too." He sighed heavily, taking in Will. He was thrilled to see him. "I never thought this could ever happen."

"Neither did I." Will confessed. He looked down at his legs that were covered by the pants Allegra had given him. "The Magic Keeper of Primavera - he said there was a way...a way I can come and see *you*."

Hannibal was taken back. "*Magic*. I'd say it was impossible, but others would say the existence of merfolk were a myth." He wondered. "I'm guessing your family down below are not too happy about this?"

"They know about you. They tried forbidding me from seeing you ever again..." Will could not imagine Hannibal not being in his life. "So, here I am now."

Hannibal chuckled. "Yes. Here you are." He moved his hands and took Will's, expecting to find scales on his arms. "It's so different not seeing your scales. Or your tail."

"Just as how different it is for me not having them." Will imagined he would be a bit shaken up by these changes, but what helped was knowing it all meant being with Hannibal. The fact that Hannibal was here now made all his doubts fade away. "Everything is so different up here..."

"It's going to continue to feel that way, amico mio. I'm assuming you haven't been to many places since you've arrived." Hannibal said.

Will remembered the one who brought him here. "I've met Chiyoh! She's like you described her. She's always seeing things - calculating and studying to figure it all out."

"I imagine she did that with you. Trying to figure out all of you, especially your ties with me." It made Hannibal smile proudly. "She's always been protective of me."

Will thought of his own friends back home. "I'm happy you have her to be protective of you."

Hannibal opened his mouth, but closed it back up. "I'm happy you're here, Will. I guess I should thank this sorcerer of yours for letting this happen."

Will was just as thankful.

🐚 ***Hannigram*** 🐚

Will followed closely as Hannibal led him out of his room and into the other room. Chiyoh had helped with getting him some better fitting clothes, but Hannibal promised him that he would make sure he would get him comfortable clothes. Will was just ecstatic that his favorite human was there with him now.

He recalled Hannibal's surprised face when he saw him. Hannibal had no clue that there could have been a possibility that Will could ever have legs. Will did not think it was possible either.

Thank you, Matthew, Will thought as he entered a large room where a table stood where an older woman and Chiyoh were.

"Mama, Chiyoh, I want to introduce you two to a dear friend of mine, Will." Hannibal gestured towards his former mer friend.

"Will...?" Simonetta questioned, waiting for Hannibal to tell them Will's full name.

Will chuckled nervously. "It's just Will."

Hannibal smiled before gesturing towards the two women in the room. "Will, this is my mother, Simonetta Sforza-Lecter, and you've already met Chiyoh."

"Piacere, Will." Simonetta greeted Will, extending her hand out.

Knowing all about this human greeting, Will took Simonetta's hand and shook it. "Likewise." He also knew what *piacere* meant thanks to Hannibal.

"A friend of Hannibal's is always welcomed in my home." Simonetta said as Hannibal led Will over to one of the seats. "He values those he brings home."

Hannibal pulled out one of the chairs. Will smiled at him before settling in it. Hannibal made his way to his own chair. Chiyoh watched the small interaction between them.

"Where did you two meet?" Chiyoh inquired. She got out of her seat to head over to the little cart behind that held a bucket with a bottle of wine.

Hannibal and Will shared a glance at each other. "Castiglioncello." Will answered. There was no lie in his response.

"Oh." Chiyoh came back to the table with a bottle. She approached everyone's wine glass. Will had not noticed he had one of his own until she came near him.

Simonetta raised her glass to her lips. "It's a beautiful beach."

"Do you live around here, Will?" Chiyoh headed back to her seat and poured wine into her own glass.

Will knew not to say his home was the ocean, but he had no clue what to say next. "We met at the Uffizi Gallery. He's a fisherman in Portofino."

"Oh Genova!" Simonetta awed. She turned to Hannibal. "Remember our trips to Genova, figlio?"

Hannibal smiled adoringly at his mother. "I do. Will has a grand collection of fishing lures." He glanced over to Will. "He *loves* his fishing lures."

Will smiled back at his friend, reminiscing his box of fishing lures he was gifted long ago. He made sure to find all the objects and hide them elsewhere. He was glad Jack and Bella did not dispose of the items. They were important. Gifts from Hannibal that he kept close.

Chiyoh observed them with interest. "I hope the fishing has been going good for you, Will."

Will nodded. "It has!" He watched as Hannibal took his wine glass, sniffing it and then drinking from it. He examined his own wine glass and took it gently in his hands. He had never had this before.

"I hope you enjoy the wine, Signor Will." Simonetta eyed her own wine glass. "I'm always making sure to provide the best wines for my dear guests. Hopefully it is to your liking."

"Grazie, Signora Lecter." Will thanked Simonetta. Hannibal had taught him a few things about how to converse with people respectfully. He picked up his glass, sniffed the wine and put the glass to his lips.

It was unlike anything he has ever had. The red liquid was sweet and bitter in his mouth, but it was not horrible. He took another sip from the cup.

"Signor Will, have you only ever seen Castiglioncello of Florence?" Simonetta questioned, earning a weak nod from Will. She turned to Hannibal. "You should take him around the city, figlio. I think he'd enjoy it."

Chiyoh narrowed her eyes. "Hannibal, is there no one else you're showing around Florence?" Will had been too busy taking in the flavor of the wine to notice the looks between Hannibal and Chiyoh.

"*Bedelia* is busy right now, Chiyoh. She said whenever you have the party date set, Mama, to let her know she can be prepared." Hannibal related when he saw Chiyoh's eyes softened.

Simonetta nodded. "I'll have everything arranged soon enough. We'll have something made up for Will too if he's going to be staying for that long?"

Hannibal hung his head low before eyeing Will. "We'll see when the date has been set."

"Very well." Simonetta said, glancing over at Will. "You'll love Florence, Will. It is a beautiful city."

Will looked at Simonetta. He himself had always wondered what the city looked like. All he could see was his view from the beach. Now, he was actually going to roam a human city.

The best part was that he would be roaming the city with Hannibal.

"Do you think they suspect something?" Will questioned as Hannibal led him into his room.

"I don't know. If someone is curious it'd be Chiyoh. I think my mother is just amused by it all, but I think she likes you." Hannibal said, leading Will down the hallway towards another room. "We have guest rooms so you can take one of them."

Will followed Hannibal as he opened a door and headed inside the room. It reminded him of Hannibal's in a way, but it was a bit more emptier. The walls were white and the floors were a deep grey. There was a bed that was so unlike his seagrass bed back home. The windows in the villa were different too.

"Here's the balcony." Hannibal said, opening two doors that led right outside on a small platform. The area was wide enough for two people to stand there. "You can see Castiglioncello from here a bit."

Will stared out beyond, in awe by the sight. Seeing the sky's reflection on the ocean was breathtaking. "How far is Florence from here?"

"For a drive from here to Florence is an hour, but it'll go by." Hannibal explained.

Will thought of what Chiyoh and Simonetta had mentioned before. "What's this party your mother and Chiyoh were talking about?"

Hannibal was silent for a moment until he found his words. "It's a celebration for...something."

Will raised an eyebrow. What could this *something* be? "Is it for your mother?"

"More or less, yes." Hannibal replied. He cleared his throat and looked back at the beach. "I know it's not even been a day but do you miss it?"

Will eyed the beach. It had not been long and all he could think about was finding Hannibal before. He took in the sight of the countless human objects here and there, but he did not think about his home or the ones he left behind. He had been too occupied to think about anything else.

Then again, he thought back of his tail when he stumbled a bit. Continuing to walk around was good practice for getting the hang of using his legs, but he remembered his whole life of just swimming amongst the waves of the ocean and getting place to place.

It was a whole other world and the only person he knew was Hannibal. He had yet to feel all alone, but he figured at some point he would feel it.

He had made Beverly, Jimmy and Brian promise so as far as anyone else knew he had just ran away from home. Would they search for him? Would Matthew tell anyone that he had given him a potion so he could have legs?

"I haven't really thought about it but..I do." Will admitted. He was so used to visiting Hannibal on the beach and then heading back to Primavera. It would not be like that this

time.

Hopefully everyone he loved would not hate him.

"I know they miss you too." Hannibal stated. He moved his hand to brush a strand out of Will's face. He took a step away from the balcony. "I'll see you tomorrow morning. Buonanotte, Will."

Will blushed as Hannibal smiled at him before exiting the balcony. Will touched his face where Hannibal's fingers had been.

Things could only get better from here on out.

Chapter End Notes

I know I hate putting Hannibal and Will through this 😭😭😭 gotta be hopeful for our dear couple 🥲

Diciannove

Chapter Summary

Another update!!!
Now warning time, I have never been to Florence or Italy so it was all research for me. I tried describing things the best way I possibly could and I must say - researching stuff about what they have in Florence was very intriguing especially the Loggia dei Lanzi - I think doing research on what the stories to the different statues were very interesting. I'd love to one day visit Italy especially Florence.
So if I got things wrong in here whether it is the descriptions or the spelling that is my fault I definitely tried my best when it came to researching 😅😅😅
I hope you all enjoy 💙💙💙💙🐚🐚🐚🐚🐚🐚

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

The light knock at the door had been what woke the former merman up. He slowly rose from the bed, "Come in," he called out to whoever was behind the door. Will realized he had not dreamt at all last night. He must have been pretty exhausted from the eventful day yesterday and that was why he had passed out within seconds of falling onto the bed.

Chiyoh entered the room holding some clothes in her hands. "Here, Will. I got you some clothes. Since you don't have any of your own, we'll be providing you some."

Once Chiyoh had placed the clothes at the edge of the bed, Will picked up the shirt. The texture of it was soft to the touch and he figured he would be comfortable in it. Clothes were still a weird thing for him to get used to. Allegra had been kind enough to lend him *socks* and some shoes which were just as hard to grow accustomed to.

The clothes consisted of a plain white button-up shirt along with black trousers. It was casual, but then Chiyoh brought in other clothes that had many pieces to them including some fancy looking shoes.

"What's that?" Will eyed the fancier clothes.

Chiyoh stopped, looking befuddled by Will's words. "It's your tuxedo. Hannibal is taking you to the Uffizi Gallery this evening. There's going to be an opening of new painting so formal attire."

Will eyed the tuxedo, feeling the material of the clothes. He would see later how it would look and feel.

"I'll let you dress." Chiyoh said, leaving Will's room.

Will got out of bed slowly and began undressing and dressing. He was still getting used to changing into clothes, but he was starting to get the hang of everything. After he was finished he exited his room. Simonetta and Chiyoh were drinking at a table near a window while Hannibal was waiting.

Will was nearly in the room when Hannibal turned to look at him. "I hope you're excited, Will."

"I am!" Will exclaimed. He had heard all about Florence from Hannibal for years. It was nice that he would finally get to see it from his own eyes.

"We'll be back to get ready for the event at the Uffizi Gallery." Hannibal said, approaching the table to give his mother a kiss.

"Both of you be careful, per favore." Simonetta said with a small wave as Hannibal led Will out of the villa.

The next human object that was to be introduced to Will was something big and black. It had doors with windows attached to them. Will was about to open his mouth to say something when Hannibal opened one of the doors for him to go in.

"What...what is this?" Will asked apprehensively.

Hannibal chuckled. "It's a car, Will. Humans use it to get from place to place. If we walked from Livorno to Florence it would take *eighteen* hours. Driving will take about an hour."

Will cocked his head. "So...it'll just take us to Florence?"

"Yes." Hannibal replied, leaving the door wide open as he approached Will. "I promise you that you're not going to get hurt. Some people are horrible drivers, but I can assure you I am not one of those people. You can trust me."

Will knew he could trust Hannibal.

If Hannibal was saying something was true then it must be.

"O-okay..." Will muttered, heading inside the car. He noticed there was a seat in there for him which he then sat down. He flinched when Hannibal gently closed the door. He was worried for a moment that Hannibal had left him, but then the other door opened and Hannibal was sitting next to him.

"See?" Hannibal said, putting something in a slit in the car before putting a rope around his chest. "Don't forget your seat belt, Will."

"Seat belt?" Will was confused.

Hannibal smiled before taking the *seat belt* and strapping it across Will. "You need to wear one all the time you're in the car for safety precautions.

"Oh." Will felt the seat belt and even tugged at it a bit.

A few seconds had went by when he felt the car move. It was not slow or fast, but the movement had surprised him. He held onto the belt as the car continued moving. To try and maybe distract himself, he glanced at the window where he could see the outside of Livorno.

It was different seeing everything passing by him in mere seconds. It was very much different than walking place to place like he was slowly getting used to.

He kept his eyes glued to the window as the car continued moving. He did not turn around to see Hannibal's amused grin on his face.

"We should be arriving soon." Hannibal broke the silence as Will kept his eyes on the window. "I know it must be weird going from having a tail, moving place to place on your legs and now being a transported in an item."

Will could not agree with Hannibal more.

"It's all so...different." It was all Will could say. He did not *hate* the whole experience, it was just so odd. He supposed it got people to places quicker. "I always just felt like all humans had were their legs to take them places."

"There are many other ways of transportation, Will. There's planes which can take you places while you're up in the sky."

Will wheeled around to face Hannibal, shock written all over his face. "You can...be up in the sky?"

Hannibal nodded. "That's how I always got from Paris to Florence. Some people have a hard time getting on an airplane, but I like it most of the time."

"Wow...being up in the sky." Will was in disbelief.

It was not long for the car to finally stop. Hannibal stopped the car and took off his seat belt. Will followed along and took off his too. Hannibal opened his door and exited the car and Will did the same.

"I wish I could show you everything Florence has to offer but that'd take weeks." Hannibal said with a small chuckle.

Will smiled. "There must be so much."

"There is." Hannibal agreed. He stuffed his hands in his pockets. "I'd show you it all if I could."

I wish for that too, Will thought. He did not care wherever Hannibal took him as long as they were together.

"Where are we headed to first?" Will asked curiously.

"I'll take you around the Piazza della Signoria. There are many parts of it, all equally beautiful pieces of art." Hannibal said as he led Will further into the city.

Will could see the beauty of the city early on while Hannibal took him around. There were gorgeous, stunning masterpieces all throughout Florence. The piazzas which Hannibal told him were a public square or marketplace. Each of them were all styled differently.

The Piazza della Signoria had a well known monument known as Fonte di Piazza. It was known as Neptune Fountain, a big fountain with statues all over it.

"It's Neptune surrounded by four horses and three tritons." Hannibal explained as they stood near the fountain. "Bartolomeo Ammanati, a sculptor, had created it to celebrate the wedding of Francesco de' Medici, son of Cosimo I, to Princess Johanna of Austria in 1565."

"All for the celebration of two people getting married." Will said with a small smile. "That must have been an excitement."

Hannibal nodded. "It was. The marriage indicated Medici's rise into the ranks of Europe's great ruling houses since he was going to be given the title Grand Duke."

Will stared at the fountain in amazement before Hannibal took him to the next place. Afterwards, they headed to their next place to see.

Loggia dei Lanzi, also known as Loggia della Signoria was a masterpiece itself like the rest of Florence. Flanking the entrance are two lions made of marble. People were looking around taking pictures and admiring everything at their own pace.

"These lions are known as the Medici lions. They were originally in the Medici Villa in Rome." Hannibal pointed at the lion on the right. "This one one is a Roman statue from the 2nd century AD, the other one was made in 1598 by Flaminio Vacca."

Will eyed the two lions. "They wanted to make a pair of *lions*?" He did not even know what a lion was until now. You can definitely not find these in the ocean even though they did have *lionfish*.

"Renaissance artists were copying ancient sculptures to learn from antiquity." Hannibal informed him.

All throughout the open hall, the statues were everywhere and out for people to see. The first ones they came across were the rows of statues on the left.

The next statue seemed quite complex based on how it looked. There were marble bodies stretching upward together in a spiral movement. The statue can be examined from all sides and it seemed like it did not have a single viewpoint. It was known as *Rape of the Sabine women* by Giambologna.

"It was created by a single block of marble. Magnificent, isn't it?" Hannibal said, taking in the statue.

Will turned to Hannibal. "What's the story behind it?"

"Male population had increased during 750 B.C.E and the Roman men were in need of wives so they can start families. After failed negotiations with the neighboring town of Sabine for

their women, the Roman men created a plan to abduct Sabine women. They did this during a summer festival. A Roman man is holding a Sabine woman while a Sabine man is crouching down in defeat.

"The title itself can be misleading since there is no sexual violation going on. It is sometimes also referred to as *The Abduction of the Sabine Women*." Hannibal clarified as he took a small walk around the statue. Will followed along, his eyes glued to the Roman man holding the Sabine woman.

Will muttered. "All for just needing wives to carry on the lineage."

"Yes." Hannibal agreed, taking one last look before heading off to the next statue.

The second statue was *Menelaus supporting the body of Patroclus*. There was a man holding the body of another man. Or rather the man was *supporting* the other male as he seemed to lay there maybe dead or unconscious.

"This is a representation of an episode in the Iliad of the two characters Menelaus and Patroclus."

"The Iliad?" Will was unfamiliar with that.

"Oh yes. The Iliad is an epic poem, written by Homer, that covers the quarrels and fighting near the end of the Trojan War. It is a well-known war of history."

"What caused the war?" Will asked.

Hannibal grinned. "The Trojan king's son, Paris, and Helen, the wife of the Greek king Menelaus were the ones who caused the war."

Will tilted his head. "What did they do to have caused such a thing?"

"They ran off together. The war lasted for ten years. The Greeks massacred the Trojan men and took their women. It's interesting to think how one decision can truly change the fate for so many people. Who was expecting a war to occur so suddenly? A war that would last so long."

Will knew nothing about the whole Trojan War or who Paris and Helen were, but it seemed like there was much to discuss. He did not know the situation of how Helen could leave her husband and run off with some other man.

Mers were nothing like humans. Mating for life, they could never just abandon their life mates. Why did Helen just leave her husband? Did she not ever love him? Maybe there was more behind it than he knew.

Will knew if he got to be with the one he loved, he could never leave them.

With the thought of never leaving Hannibal stuck in his head, the two continued on checking out the other statues. Every time they came near one, Hannibal was there to explain the whole story and answer questions Will had.

Hannibal knew the statues like the back of his hand.

Once they were finished looking at all the statues of Loggia dei Lanzi, they left to check out the rest of the piazza.

"Hannibal?" Will turned around when someone had called his friend. Right behind them was a man dressed in a navy blue two-piece suit. He even had a cane in his right hand.

Hannibal looked at the man with a small smile. "Frederick. It's nice to see you. I hope your visit here in Florence has been going well."

"So far so good. I can see why you love the city, Hannibal, it is quite a view. Do you plan on just staying here or going elsewhere when it comes to receiving patients?" Frederick said with a small grin.

Hannibal sighed. "I'm still unsure at the moment, Frederick."

"I'm guessing you'd have to speak to *Mrs. Lecter* about that, wouldn't you?" Frederick smirked this time. Hannibal did not appreciate it one bit by the unamused look.

Will supposed Simonetta's opinion would matter when it came to where Hannibal would go when he was start helping people. He wondered if Simonetta would let him stay here. Maybe she would think it would be best for Hannibal if he went elsewhere like he had when he was a boy.

"Yes, it would seem so." Hannibal finally replied to Frederick. He gestured to Will. "Forgive my lack of manners, but this is my good friend Will. Will, an acquaintance of mine, Frederick Chilton."

Frederick extended his hand out. "Pleasure to meet you, Will...?" Like Simonetta, he had waited for a surname.

Will simply shook Frederick's hand. "Just Will will do!"

"Ahh. Very well." Frederick decided, taking his hand back. "Are you from around here, Will?"

"He's lived in Portofino with his family. He's just visiting this week and I'm showing him around Florence since he's never been." Hannibal explained. Will had forgotten for a moment where he apparently was from.

Portofino. Portofino. Portofino. He kept replaying the place in his head just in case someone else asked him again where he came from.

"Well, don't let me interrupt your plans." Frederick said to them before bidding them a goodbye and then he was on his way.

Will turned around to glance back at the man. "You have some interesting acquaintances, Hannibal."

"Frederick is definitely peculiar. He's not my favorite person in the world. He can be quite arrogant at times." Hannibal stated.

Arrogance made Will think of Mason. Thankfully, no one had to deal with Mason anymore.

"Arrogant people can be too much, it's very tiring to deal with them. Lucky for me, Frederick is just visiting. He'll be back in Maryland soon." Hannibal said.

"Maryland?" Will queried.

"It's in the United States. I went there to study, but I was going hoping to be a surgeon. I changed my mind soon enough though." Hannibal informed Will. "It's not a horrible place at all, yet nothing can hold up a candle to Florence."

Will smiled hearing how much Hannibal loved Florence. He already knew that. He has known that for *years*.

"Well...you don't have to go back." Will pointed out.

"True, I can just stay here." Hannibal agreed. "I'd be fine with that. If I can, I'd stay forever in Florence."

So you should stay, Will wanted to say, but he did not want Hannibal feeling any pressure. The human loved Florence, but Will did not want him to be forced to decide to stay.

🐚 ***Hannigram*** 🐚

As it got later, Hannibal drove them back to Livorno. They were going to head back to the villa and get dressed for the event going on in the Uffizi Gallery. Will was curious and excited to see the place. For a long time he had just heard Hannibal talk all about the gallery and now finally, he was going to get the chance to see it for himself.

Hannibal had headed into his own room when Will realized he had no idea how to put on a tuxedo. It was different than a casual shirt and trousers. He looked down at the tuxedo curiously. There looked to be three types of shirts?

"Will?" Will was just standing there observing the clothes when he heard Chiyoh's voice.

"Come in!" Will called out to her.

"I forget to give you your-" Chiyoh entered the room and was surprised to see Will was not dressed. "Why aren't you dressed?"

"Uhm..." Will scratched the back of his neck. "To be honest, I've never worn a tuxedo before ever..." Was that something a human might even say?

Lucky for Will, Chiyoh did not seem bothered at all by his words. Maybe not all humans got the chance to wear tuxedos. "Oh, well I can help."

"Thank you." Will felt blessed thanks to having Chiyoh there to help.

"Go ahead and get dressed in your socks, shoes and trousers first." Chiyoh turned away to give Will privacy as he did as she instructed. Once he was done, she turned back. "So, you put your dress shirt on first and then you put on your vest."

Will did as he usually did when putting on a shirt when he grabbed the white dress shirt. He then picked up the black vest Chiyoh mentioned. "Now you're just going to put the vest over your dress shirt. There are buttons on your vest which you'll snap together so the vest holds."

After a minute or two of struggling a bit, Will had successfully gotten the vest over his dress shirt. He began putting the buttons together while Chiyoh grabbed the tuxedo jacket. "And then you just wear this over both." She helped him one put one of his arms over the sleeves before he did the other one by himself and straightened the tuxedo jacket by himself.

"These are cufflinks." Chiyoh showed him the small white looking buttons. He raised his arms so she could cufflink the cuffs of his shirt. "There, you're ready." Chiyoh said proudly as she examined Will like a painter admiring its masterpiece.

"Thank you again, Chiyoh." Will thanked as he gave her a genuine smile. Chiyoh smiled back at him as she led him out of the room. Hannibal was in the room putting his cufflinks own on.

Hannibal looked up, staring at Will for a few seconds. "You look wonderful, Will."

"So do you." Will took in how handsome Hannibal looked dressed in his elegant black tuxedo.

Hannibal smiled at Will before glancing at Chiyoh. "We'll be back later, Chiyoh. Don't wait up on us."

"Have fun you two." Chiyoh sent them a small wave as they exited the villa.

Will stayed close to Hannibal as the human led him into the big white building where a large crowd of humans dressed formally were making their way. Will was happy that he was dressed for the occasion.

According to Hannibal, some grand new artwork was being presented. Will knew the gallery was one of Hannibal's favorite places. His friend had mentioned the place numerous times in the past. Will had wondered many times what the place would look like and now he no longer needed to imagine.

Everyone was led into an entrance room where there were black chairs scattered along the room. There was a platform where a woman dressed in a golden dress stood.

"Over here, Will." Hannibal called to him. Will headed towards Hannibal and the seats he had chosen for them. Will sat next to Hannibal.

Will eyed the woman. "Who is she?"

"Her name is Lenora. She is an opera singer." Hannibal informed Will. He smiled at Lenora's direction. "I've heard her a few times. She can hold a tune."

"A tune..." Will wondered what these new things Hannibal was talking about meant.

Hannibal nodded. "Ah yes, *music*. Mers definitely don't have that I'm assuming. You'll see soon enough, Will." Will could hear the excitement in Hannibal's tone as everyone else sat down and silenced.

Moments after, Lenora opened her mouth and sang.

It was unlike anything Will had ever experienced before. The group of men nearby were holding these big objects that sound was coming out of. With Lenora's voice and the sounds of the objects it all flowed smoothly making a masterpiece.

This must have been the music Hannibal was referring to.

The blue-eyed male sat still in his seat as he listened to Lenora sing her song. His attention swayed when he saw something at the corner of his eye. A few seats away from them, there was a man who had turned to look towards them. Will wondered why the man was looking at them when he noticed the man was actually staring at one person in particular.

He was staring at Hannibal.

Will gulped. He leaned close to Hannibal, whispering to him. "Hannibal, someone is looking at you."

Hannibal sighed. "Yes, I've noticed." He did not dare to glance at the man who had his undivided attention on him. "He's one of my acquaintances. I've helped him with a few things he's dealt with in the past, but he seems to have some fascination with me."

Will was confused. "Oh."

"Trust me, I wish he'd find someone else to befriend. Maybe that man he's with is a new friend of his. Don't pay attention him, Will. Soon, we'll be hearing from him." Hannibal said, continuing to look towards Lenora. Will turned his attention back to the opera singer.

Once Lenora's performance ended, everyone rose from their seats cheering and clapping loudly. Following everyone else's reaction, Will did the same. He noticed the man staring at Hannibal was clapping too while his gaze was glued to Hannibal.

Hannibal and he had just exited their seats when they heard a voice.

"Hi." The man that had been staring at Hannibal greeted them suddenly. He had this overly friendly and likely naivety attitude to him. Will did not know whether to trust this human or not. The man that was right next to him looked annoyed.

Hannibal gestured towards the man. "Will, this is one of my friends, Franklyn Froideveaux. I've helped him with a few things here and there."

"Some would consider me a patient." Franklyn said jokingly. He extended his hand to Will. "Nice to meet you, Will." Franklyn turned to his friend. "Hannibal, Will, this is my friend Tobias Budge."

Tobias sent them a small smile. "Pleasure to meet you."

"Likewise." Hannibal said to him. "I'm hoping you both enjoyed your evening?"

Franklyn awed. "I loved every moment of it! You had mentioned your love for the Uffizi Gallery and I insisted on bringing Tobias along too."

"The opera singer sang gorgeously." Tobias chimed in.

Hannibal agreed. "Yes, Lenora did a fabulous performance of *Piangero la sorte mia*."

"You know much about the Italian opera." Tobias pointed out, sounding impressed with Hannibal.

Hannibal shrugged. "I attended many opere serie throughout my time in Italy. I'd attend the Opera di Frenze as well as other opera houses in Italy such as Teatro Massimo and Teatro Alla Scala."

"I see you favor the opera." Tobias said with a small nod.

Hannibal smirked. "I appreciate the beautiful music my ears pick up. I'd highly recommend it."

Franklyn sent Hannibal a pleased smile. "We'll have to attend together some time. I think the opera is fascinating."

"One day." Hannibal let the conversation end with that. "Excuse me gentlemen, but Will and I are going to head in. Enjoy your evening."

"You too!" Franklyn exclaimed.

Hannibal gently took Will's hand and led him away. Will turned his head a bit and felt glad to see Franklyn and Tobias were not following them.

"You were right. He is really fascinated with you." Will said with a small giggle.

Hannibal rolled his eyes. "The fascination is not mutual, unfortunately for him. I'm relieved they let us go, especially when I'd love to just spend my time with you."

Will kept his face down. He felt too shy for Hannibal to look upon his flushed face.

The former merman began exploring the gallery with his eyes and everywhere Hannibal led him to.

In every room there were different sketches presented on the walls. Will would have called it sketches, but Hannibal said these were different. They were known as paintings. Famous paintings of Italian painters that everyone came to see. Every painting had a different picture with different colors and styles.

The Birth of Venus by Sandro Botticelli was where they had stopped. Everyone else were taking their time stopping to examine the paintings or just stealing one glance and heading over to the next one. Will stopped whenever Hannibal did. He could tell Hannibal wanted to appreciate all the paintings even though he admitted to visiting the Uffizi Gallery many times.

"I'd just sit here and sketch. I'd try to recreate these stunning paintings." Hannibal said, keeping his eyes on Botticelli's painting.

Will knew how talented Hannibal was when it came to his sketches. "I know you were able to succeed. Your sketches were always perfect."

Hannibal turned to smile at Will, appreciating his compliment. He continued walking into the next room with Will trailing behind him. The next painting they stopped at was Bronzino's *The Portrait of Lucrezia Panciatichi*.

"Artists find their muse and can just continue to create beautifully. Many of my favorite sketches aren't the ones I tried recreating that I admired every time I visited here." Hannibal admitted with a small sigh.

Will took one glance of the portrait of Lucrezia Panciatichi, a woman looking so still. "What were your favorites?"

"The ones I sketched of you." Hannibal confessed, Will feeling his face heat up. "In some sketches I made your scales more defined, some I didn't. No matter what, I prefer those ober the rest of my sketches."

Will gulped and froze for a moment as Hannibal left the room to the next.

He always said the right things to make him feel so much. Will brushed off the feeling even though it would not leave and went to look for Hannibal in the next room.

Thankfully as they finished up, no other acquaintances of Hannibal's came by to interrupted them. Of course, Will followed Hannibal wherever he led him to.

After they made it back to Livorno, Hannibal spoke up. "How about we head to Castiglioncello?"

Will thought about the time. "At night?" He grinned, thinking about the times that had met at night. Once they had nearly kissed and the other time his secret had been discovered.

Hannibal nodded. "Or are you too tired? That's perfectly fine too."

"No, it sounds fun." Will admitted. He would always be up to spend time with Hannibal.

Hannibal grinned. "Let's get dressed in something a bit more casual. I do not want sand all over my tuxedo." Will chuckled lightly. "I'll grab you some clothes." Hannibal left for a moment to head into his room. Will waited for Hannibal to return with clothes. "Here you go."

Will took the clothes. "Thank you," he said before walking to his room to go change.

It did not take long for the two men to be finished dressing. Will exited his room to see Hannibal in the other room waiting for him.

Hannibal turned around to see Will approaching him. "Come on, Will." Will smiled and followed Hannibal out of the villa.

Chapter End Notes

Info:

https://www.planetware.com/tourist-attractions-/florence-i-to-f.htm

https://www.planetware.com/florence/piazza-della-signoria-i-to-fps.htm

http://www.visual-arts-cork.com/sculpture/rape-of-the-sabine-women.htm

https://smarthistory.org/giambologna-abduction-of-a-sabine-woman/

https://statues.vanderkrogt.net/object.php?webpage=ST&record=itto050

https://www.britannica.com/event/Trojan-War

Also, another update will be released extremely soon 😊

Venti

Chapter Summary

Another update like I promised! 🥰

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Will followed Hannibal closely as they made their way from Livorno to Castiglioncello. It had been a fun day spending time with Hannibal as he showed him around Florence. There was definitely more to see, but Will was just happy to have Hannibal by his side the whole time.

He could want nothing more.

Will grinned when Hannibal took a seat on the sand right where they would usually meet up. Will followed Hannibal's actions and removed his own shoes and sat next to him.

"Remember the last time we were here at night?" Hannibal asked as they both sat on the sand. It nearly felt like old times, just this time around Will had human legs and not a tail.

Will chuckled nervously. "I'm sorry about that. I know that must have been frightening for you to see." He had been frightened himself until he was underwater and saw who had dragged him below.

"I was horried. I felt *useless*. All I could think was the possibility that something had happened to you. I didn't even go into the water to see." Hannibal sighed heavily, it sounded like he was getting frustrated with himself. "I had to cling onto the hope that you were okay."

Will frowned when hearing how guilty Hannibal sounded. He wished there could have been a way he could have let him know he was fine. "I'm sorry you were so worried."

Hannibal turned to Will. "You have nothing to apologize for, Will. I'm just grateful it was other mers you knew."

Mers who forbid me from seeing you, Will thought humorlessly. "Me too. Besides, it's not like you could've done much. Don't feel bad, please."

"I'll try not to." Hannibal muttered.

Both men just stared at the ocean before them. Will dug his feet into the warm sand, the feeling being different from when it had been his tail on the sand. It was so different and he

supposed he should have anticipated that. Experiencing it just made it more real and foreign to him.

It was all so different right now being with Hannibal. This whole time he was just a merman visiting his human friend who taught him so much about human objects. They had just been children long ago, now they were adults and things were expected of them. Will was unsure of what was expected of Hannibal, but he guessed his human friend could relate.

What did it make them now? Hannibal the human with his friend who was a former merman?

We're just Hannibal and Will, I guess, Will thought. "Remember the first time we met?" Will could see the memory replaying in his head. A younger him staring at a younger Hannibal just to end up being caught by the human and dragged down into the water by his friends.

Hannibal chuckled softly. "How can I ever forget?" Will turned to him. "I was just sketching the beach when I caught a pair of eyes eyeing me."

Will giggled. He still could not believe he had been too lost in his thoughts to realize that Hannibal had given his attention to him. He was lucky that Hannibal was a good human or else he may not be here.

"My friends were so mad at me. They scolded me while they were in disbelief about the whole thing. While they were wanting me to never head back up, I just couldn't make that promise." Will never could and even now he doubted he could make it now.

"It had been an interesting summer for the both of us. I learned about mers and you learned about humans. Two beings coming together in union peacefully. Too bad no one we know would be a fan of our friendship." Hannibal said with a small smile.

Will nodded. "Jack and Bella looked so disappointed." He could feel those maroon eyes on him. "Jack had found everything you had ever given me. All the things I hold close my heart...they just stared at it all in *disgust*."

"I don't doubt that made you feel any good. You have a tail and scales like they do, but at that moment they must have made you feel like an outsider."

It had.

Will had never taken into consideration about how it had made him feeling seeing Jack and Bella's reaction to his collection. He was too busy thinking of an explanation that would make then understand, but it would never work. He could try any type of wording and they would never see eye-to-eye with him.

Humans were bad was what they believed so there was no way they would ever see things the way he did.

They had been so mad and looked at him in disappointment he knew every mer he knew would react the same. It ached knowing that his parents would have more than likely been

just as livid with him. They would have forbid him too and probably have his whole collection destroyed.

Will knew that even though it was hard now that those he knew looked at him differently that he would not have it any other way. They may never see him the same again, but he'd rather have them look at him and whisper things than having never met Hannibal at all.

He was glad to have met Hannibal. So, he wondered. "Do you regret it?" Will began. "Do you regret meeting me?"

Hannibal turned to look at the ocean.
"It was one of the greatest moments in my life."

Will froze. He may have been expecting Hannibal to be happy about meeting him, but he was not ready to hear those exact words. "Y-you...you mean that, Hannibal?"

"Will, you mean a lot to me. As much as Chiyoh means to me. You've also been there to hear me out. I was so young when I lost so much. I lost my father and sister. They did not deserve to lose their lives. They made me happy and I thought I'd never feel so happy ever again, that was until I met you.

You didn't replace them or anything. They're irreplaceable, but I was so sad for a long time. I thought I'd never be happy. I had my uncle, aunt and Chiyoh but it's different. Meeting you changed my life. There are few great moments in my life, Will, and meeting you was one of them."

Will could feel his heart racing by the kind words Hannibal was telling him.

"Hannibal..." The human meant so much to him too, but how could he say anything as beautiful as Hannibal's words.

Hannibal asked. "Do you regret meeting *me*, Will?"

He already knew the answer. There was no need to think qboht it. "Never." He placed his hands on the sand. "I can't imagine you not being a part of my life. I did not expect to ever befriend or meet a human ever. I was curious and wanted to see what it was like. I was not expecting to end up with a great friend."

Hannibal smiled at him. "I wish for you to always be with me, Will, in my life."

"I wish the same." Will stated, maroon meeting cerulean.

Hannibal would have continued looking into Will's eyes until he recalled something. "There's something I want to give you, Will."

"Okay." Will said.

Hannibal dug into his right pocket until he held out a ring with a shining blue stone. Will eyed the object, it almost reminding him of the rings on Alana and Margot's fingers.

"I want you to have this, Will. It is a gift I can only give to you. It is meaningful...something no one can ever understand. Others might think it should belong to someone else, but it was always meant to be yours. It is yours." Hannibal said, taking Will's hand and placing the ring on his finger.

Will thought of the wedding rings some mers wore. He thought of all the gifts Hannibal had ever given him and how mers made their romantic intentions clear through gifts.

Could this ring possibly mean something similar? Will would like to hope so, but Hannibal was not saying anything that could indicate anything. He said the ring belonged to him and no one else. There was more behind the ring than anyone could ever understand too.

Will was confused, but he loved the gift. Hannibal was always giving him so many things. He always had. While Will could only ever give him shells.

"I can't believe all I could ever give you were seashells while you were always gifting me so many things, Hannibal." Will said as he looked down at the beautiful ring.

Hannibal looked at Will adoringly. "Will, I loved every one of the shells you brought me." Will looked up when Hannibal took his face in his hand. "However, I don't need anything in this world when I have you."

Will stayed still as Hannibal's words registered in his head.

Hannibal wanted nothing when he could have him just like how all Will wanted was Hannibal.

Chapter End Notes

Just to clear up any confusion that ring Hannibal was holding in Quindici that was supposed to be the engagement ring to Bedelia - that's the exact same ring he gave to Will in this chapter! He couldn't give Bedelia that ring because it was too meaningful and giving her that ring would be an utter to himself and even Bedelia too.
Also I'm going to try to update asap because I have things written out already but at the same time I have to keep going since there aren't many chapters left to write for this story since we are reaching to end of this journey too 🥲🐚🐚🐚🐚
So I hope you enjoyed and until the next update which will hopefully be soon 💙💙💙💙💙💙💙🐚🐚🐚🐚🐚

Ventuno

Chapter Summary

Update time ~~

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Hannibal kept his hand on Will's face as they stared at each other. This was not the first time they had gotten lost in their own worlds. Being so close and intimate. There have been many moments when Hannibal just wanted to hold Will and kiss him passionately.

Was it harder back then or now, he could not tell.

Back then Will still had a tail and Hannibal was not arranged to marry someone. It would have seemed impossible to try to be anything but friends since they were different creatures, but would it have been so bad to have had something even for a short amount of time?

Hannibal would have met the same fate. Not being involved with Will romantically back then or not would not have changed a promise his father and Mr. Du Maurier made long ago. It would have been there waiting to approach him when he got to a certain age when his mother would let him in on the promise.

Still, engaged to Bedelia or not, Hannibal still wanted to feel Will's lips on his. The only lips he would ever want to kiss were Will's.

Perhaps this would be the only time he would ever get the chance.

With that thought in his mind, Hannibal leaned closer to Will's face. He saw the other close his eyes as he waited for Hannibal's face to come towards him. Hannibal smiled seeing Will wanting the kiss as much as he did.

Hannibal was inches away from Will's lips when it happened. Neither of them had noticed a large wave forming or that a pair of eyes had been watching them from afar.

All they felt was the freezing water that splashed onto them.

Matthew growled angrily. He was back in his room at the palace. He looked down at the clamshell where he could see Hannibal still holding Will close to him. He was thankful he had caught them so he could splash them with that wave.

What was Will thinking? What was Hannibal thinking?!

"That human filth! How dare he touches what's *mine*!" Matthew fumed as he began throwing the bottles closest to him, everything fall to the floor and shattering. "He cannot have Will."

Will was his. No one else's.

"I thought...I thought they were just friends!" Matthew snarled. He thought he had been doing Will a favor by giving him the chance to have human legs and visit his friend. He knew this bond arrangement was sudden for Will and he figured that he might as well give him the gift that would make him accept him.

What better gift than to let Will be with his friend for a day or two?

Of course, that's when Matthew believed that the two were just that. He had watched them this whole time. He was glad that Will found his friend and was spending time with him. Soon, he'd have to return to Matthew and settle down.

It seemed like Will had someone else he was thinking about. This someone else was no mer either.

Matthew grabbed a few things and threw them into the clamshell. He dipped a little bottle inside, a pink liquid filling it up.

"No one will have Will but *me*."

Both men shivered at the feeling of being drenched from that unexpected wave. Hannibal shook his head and blinked his eyes a few times, the salt water making his eyes sting a bit. Luckily during that splash, he was able to keep an arm around Will's waist.

The former merman looked to be in shock to what had happened. Neither of them would have ever expected such a moment to be ruined like that.

It was another intimate moment of theirs to be *rudely* interrupted.

Almost feels like the universe truly wants us a part, Hannibal thought sadly. He cleared his throat, spotting Will shivering a bit. He slowly got up, helping Will up too. "Come on, Will. Let's head back. If you stay in these clothes, you'll get sick."

Will nodded in reply and allowed himself to be led away from the beach.

"I don't know where that wave came from." Will muttered, his teeth chattering a bit from the cold water.

Hannibal agreed. "Luckily it was just one wave." *Sadly, our kiss was interrupted,* Hannibal wanted to say but kept his mouth shut.

Once they made it back to Livorno, they were greeted by Chiyoh who was still up. They had told Chiyoh what had happened and she had left to go run a warm bath. Hannibal went to get Will some clothes. Will did not take too long so Hannibal could take a bath too.

Hannibal had just bid Will *buonanotte* and was about to enter his room when he heard someone clear their throat. He turned to see Chiyoh sending him a knowing look with crossed arms.

"Chiyoh? What's wrong?" Hannibal asked, keeping his hand clasped around the doorknob.

Chiyoh eyed Will's room. "I want to talk to you about something, Hannibal."

Hannibal never shied away from a conversation with Chiyoh. Their talks were always intriguing and he did not doubt this time around it would be anything but interesting.

"Okay." He let go if the doorknob and stepped away from the entrance to his room. "What is it you want to talk about?"

Chiyoh made her way towards the table near the window where freshly brewed tea sat in the teapot. Chiyoh sat down on one seat and poured two cups of tea.

"You seem close to Will."

Hannibal raised an eyebrow. "Good friends are close, Chiyoh. You and I are close."

"I sense there's something more between you two." Chiyoh picked up a saucer and teacup, holding it out for Hannibal to take. Hannibal came over to sit and take the cup. "The behavior between you two...it's like watching two young teens dancing around the subject of love."

Hannibal did not plan on telling anyone about his feelings for Will. It was hard enough keeping his feelings away from the one he yearned for, but there was no point. Why tell Will when there was no way they could ever be together?

"Chiyoh, I don't-"

"The way you two look at each other. He looks at you like you're the a grand masterpiece. He looks to you as if you're everything to him. Then there's you, who looks at him like he is a lovely sight that must be painted and yet protected from everyone. You both seem happier and free when you're in each other's presence. Both accepting of each other like equals.

"Is that not love, Hannibal?" Chiyoh took her own teacup and saucer.

Hannibal sighed heavily. There was no he could argue with Chiyoh when she had been right about everything. Will was a lovely being and he had gotten the chance on multiple occasions to sketch him.

No matter how much he loved Will, the universe did not wish for them to be together. Even though Will now had legs, Hannibal had made a commitment already.

"I can't, Chiyoh." Hannibal stated dejectedly. "You know I...I have other plans in my future now."

Chiyoh was about to protest, but she realized Hannibal was right. Hannibal was tied to a promise he had made before Will had even shown up.

"I'm sorry, Hannibal."

Hannibal shook his head. "You have nothing to apologize for, Chiyoh." He did not blame anyone but the universe. "I'll have to let him know at some point."

"You're dreading that." Chiyoh knew he would. How can someone not dread telling the one they love they cannot be together no matter what?

Hannibal gripped the teacup. "I'm unsure how long I have with him, but-"

"How long you have with him?" Chiyoh questioned. What was happening to Will? "What do you mean by that, Hannibal?"

Hannibal kept his mouth shut. He could not tell Chiyoh of Will's secret. She might not even believe him. "It's nothing, Chiyoh. I have to let go of Will no matter what." He placed his cup and saucer down. "Good night."

Chiyoh watched Hannibal enter his home without turning to give her one last look. It was a devastating thing, she could imagine.

Poor Hannibal and Will.

Chapter End Notes

Someone's not happy 😬😬😬

Ventidue

Chapter Summary

Updates are gonna keep coming so stay tuned for all the new updates 😊😊😊😊

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Alana frowned as she watched from the entrance of the palace. She could see Jack and Bella talking to each other. It always began this way. Jack would tell Bella they would find Will while Bella had her head hanging low in sadness. Then, Jack would leave and head back to the palace.

Margot and she had sent a group of guards to go searching for Will. Jack and Bella had wanted to find him on their own too, but Alana believed the guards would find her friend. Not only that but she did not want Jack and Bella possibly risking their lives. Them leaving Primavera only made her think of Will's parents who had lost their lives long ago.

Will would be devastated finding out he had lost Jack and Bella too. Even though he might not have agreed with them on forbidding him from the surface, they had been the only parents he had after his own had died.

"Any news?" Alana flinched when she heard Jack's voice. She had been too occupied with her thoughts to notice Jack had swam all the way over here.

There had been no news yet unfortunately. The guards searched every day, but they came back with nothing. Alana was hoping every time they left that they would bring Will back with them. She was expecting to see her friend but he never came back with the guards.

"I'm sorry, Jack. Nothing yet." Alana said regrettably. "We are going to find him though."

Jack always looked back at her with saddened eyes as he swam away to continue his work. Alana thought it was best that Jack continued his shifts at the palace so he did not have to think too much about Will being missing, but she knew it was futile.

No one had a clue.

Not even Matthew.

"Alana?" Speak of the merman, Alana turned around to see Matthew swimming towards her. "I was wondering if the guards from last night...if they found any clues."

Alana shook her head. "I'm sorry to say, but no Matthew. There's nothing to report on Will."

Matthew hung his head low. "I see."

"I think it's best you head back and continue with your job, Matthew. I don't doubt the guards will bring Will back to us." Alana did not know who she was trying to convince anymore. Other people or herself.

Matthew nodded. "Yes, I agree." With nothing else to say, the merman turned and swam back to his own room.

Alana would have hoped Matthew would know something about Will's disappearance. The last mer who Will had seen was Matthew. She had left them alone together to get to know each other. Apparently, Will left to retrieve his *collection* and Matthew let him.

She would have scolded Matthew for just letting him go, but this whole situation was not easy for Will. She supposed Will would not have appreciated it if Matthew had tried to force him to stay. It was probably for the best that Matthew had tried to take the patient approach.

Would Will be missing if Matthew had not been so patient?

Then again, no one of them had made it easy for Will.

"Having a hard time believing your own words?" Alana relaxed upon hearing her wife's voice. She wheeled around to see concern on Margot's face. "You know, I do believe we will get him back."

Alana shook her head. "I blame myself, Margot. He must have been mad knowing that I helped Jack with this whole bond arrangement."

"You all were just thinking of the best for him, but...I wouldn't be happy if someone arranged me to be with someone I felt nothing for." Margot could see the flaws in her wife's attempt at helping Will.

"Maybe I can make things right when we find him." Alana muttered.

Margot wondered. "How would you do that?"

"I don't know yet, but I'm going to." *I plan to make everything right*, Alana thought as she hoped Will was at least safe wherever he was.

🐚 ***Hannigram*** 🐚

It was the sound of a knock on his door that woke up Will, not the sun peeking from the curtains. Will groaned and slowly got up. He wondered who could possibly be at his door.

"Come in."

The door opened and in came Chiyoh with a large box in her arms. "Buongiorno, Will. There is going to be a masquerade tonight. I have what you're going to need right here for you."

Will looked at the box curiously. Chiyoh grinned and set the box at the edge of the bed. Will slowly opened it revealing behind things inside. Chiyoh pulled everything out for Will to see.

It was a tuxedo similar to the one he had worn yesterday at the Uffizi Gallery. This time, this one was a dark blue. The tuxedo was dark blue while the vest and trousers were black. The dress shirt was white and his bow tie was black. There were even a pair of brand new black leather dress shoes.

Will was too busy examining the tuxedo that he did not pay attention when Chiyoh left to bring a smaller square box.

"And lastly, the mask." Chiyoh said as she opened the box. She gently picked it up to show Will.

The items was one of the most beautiful human objects Will had ever seen before. The mask was a beautiful dazzling navy blue with glittery small swirls scattered on the face of the mask. The edges had black material sewn and a thin black ribbon to tie the mask on.

Will softly touched the mask. He felt so lucky that something so pretty would be on his face. "It's so beautiful, Chiyoh..."

Chiyoh smiled, pleased by Will's reaction. "I'm happy to hear you love both. Hannibal said blue was your color. He had both picked out for you. He said you'll look stunning which I don't doubt."

Will thought of his dear human friend. "Where is he?"

Chiyoh was quiet for a moment, but she forced a smile. "He was meeting with a friend. He'll meet us at the venue when the party begins."

Will sighed with a big smile on his face. He could only imagine how handsome Hannibal would look in his outfit tonight. He looked gorgeous with whatever he was wearing, but no one could ignore how he looked when he was dressed so elegantly.

Hannibal would look amazing tonight as he always looked.

"You can do whatever you like for now, Will. I'll come to you as the time gets closer and then we'll head over." Chiyoh said before exiting the room.

Will glanced down at his clothes for tonight. He could feel excitement welling within him.

His mother would have preferred him use the rest of his this day to be with Bedelia. He knew he probably should have followed along with that. He should be spending any free time he has with the woman who will one day be his wife. Why would he not spend time with her? She was not a horrible woman and she was quite understanding most times.

She would have been perfect if she was the one he loved.

Hannibal knew he would never learn to love Bedelia. He would never feel the way his parents felt for each other.

He had wondered if Will would still be here long enough to attend the engagement party. He did not know much about the whole magic behind Will having legs, but he felt at some point there was a possibility that maybe the friends and family he had back at Primavera would make him return.

Hannibal wondered if Will would still want to see him knowing he was with Bedelia. They were both aware of the mutual feelings they held for each other. Unfortunately, it all felt a little too late.

He wished Will would continue to come and see him, but perhaps that was him being selfish. Why should Will want to see him? He would be busy with his work and being a husband - would he even have time? Maybe things would be different for Will and he would be unable to see Hannibal.

Hannibal never thought of a moment when he would never see Will. He had become such a big part of his life and he had always thought he would always be there. Hannibal could never blame Will for deciding to never come back.

It would hurt, but Hannibal would not hate him.

He was back in the Uffizi Gallery even though it had just been yesterday that he was there. The gallery had always been a spot in Florence where his parents would take Mischa and he. He was amazed by the art and wished to recreate it while Mischa looked at all while saying it was all pretty.

Hannibal sat down on one of the benches and grabbed his sketchpad. He eyed Botticelli's *Madonna in Glory with Seraphim*. He took his charcoal pencil and began sketching. There were other people in the gallery looking around. He paid them no mind as he got lost in his sketching.

It nearly reminded him of when he would just sketch while sitting on the beach. Sketching the beach was not as intriguing as sketching Will had been. Even now, sketching him now without his scales and tail would probably be just as interesting.

He would have to head to Castiglioncello to sketch one last time. If he never saw Will again after tonight, why would he want to return again?

How wonderful it would have been to have his entire life to keep sketching Will. Too bad things could not be different.

"Hannibal?" He looked up and saw his mother standing there before him. She was not blocking his view of Botticelli's painting.

"Mama, what are you doing here?" He would have expected her to be at the venue making preparations. Then again, things were probably already set.

Simonetta took a seat right next to her son. "I've come looking for you, figlio. I heard you weren't with Bedelia or your friend Will. Chiyoh said you had headed to Florence."

Hannibal smiled. "You knew exactly where to find me."

"I always will, figlio." Simonetta said, taking a glance at Hannibal's sketchpad. "You have the hands of an artist. So talented ever since you were a child."

Hannibal stopped sketching to face his mother. "Mama?"

"Yes, figlio?" Simonetta was staring at the painting before them.

"If two lovers truly love each other and yet, the universe keeps them a part, is this a sign of fate saying its not true? Or not true enough to let them be together?" Hannibal hoped his mother tried to not read too much into it.

Simonetta sighed and looked down at her wedding ring around her finger. "The universe is an interesting thing as is fate. I've always believed that two destined to be together will always be together. Fate has decided it long ago that they would be, but circumstances get in the way. They'll always be together in some way, even though it may not seem like it."

Hannibal turned away and frowned.

"Was that not the answer you were looking for, figlio?" Simonetta questioned with a small smile.

Hannibal shook his head. "No, the answer makes sense. It's just...it's unfortunate how some circumstances can be."

"Yes, they really can be." Simonetta agreed, eyeing her wedding ring one last time.

Will and I will always be tied together, Hannibal thought. He may not be marrying the person he loved, but that did not mean they were not meant to be.

If only the circumstances were different.

"Will!" Will smiled happily as he walked towards where his friends had left him. Well, they did not necessarily leave him. Allegra had come towards him and they had to leave. He understood that it was for their safety to not be caught.

Beverly, Jimmy and Brian were huddled as they looked relieved to see Will.

"It's been some time. How have you guys been?" Will sat down on the sand and eyed the three of them. The three of them looked uneasy by Will's question.

Beverly sighed. "Everyone is really worried, Will. Guards have been sent to look everywhere for you. They won't stop until they find anything."

"They've asked everyone if they knew anything, but even Matthew has kept his lips sealed on where you went." Jimmy said.

Will frowned at the sound of everyone worrying about him, but that did not make him feel like going back. All they were going to do is watch him to make sure he never returns to the surface and run away ever again. They would also make sure to rush the necessary mating ritual so he can *settle down* with Matthew.

He was not going to be doing that.

Brian was the one to speak next. "Come on, Will. Why don't you return? You found Hannibal already, right?"

Will nodded. "I have found Hannibal. He's shown me so much since I've been here. I've learned so much since I've been here. Humans aren't so bad. I've met other humans besides Hannibal."

"Oh gosh not more humans." Beverly sighed deeply and placed a hand over her face. "Will, you just wanted to see *one* human, remember?"

"I did and have. I want to stay here, guys. I want to stay with Hannibal. You know I...that I love him. We nearly kissed last night too." Will knew he was blushing by the time he muttered the last part.

Jimmy gasped. "You were going to kiss a *human*?"

"That's like...you only kiss your life mate, Will!" Brian exclaimed frightfully, gripping his hair.

Beverly shook her head. "You don't think you're going too far on this, Will? Letting a human kiss you - I can't believe it!"

"You all are just freaking out. Please, calm down. I can see he feels the same." Will knew Hannibal did. If it was not for that unexpected wave last night they would have already kissed by now.

"Maybe Will, but humans don't work the same as we do! Our mating rituals are all different. You can't be certain he feels the same or that a kiss from him will mean anything to him." Beverly informed her friend. She placed a hand over Will's that was in the sand. "Please Will, come back home," she said with pleading eyes.

He hated seeing his friends look so hurt. He did not mean to hurt anyone by leaving Primavera. Will just wanted to see the one he loved. Was it so hard to believe? Did they all really have to hate his decision?

It's not like he had committed an unforgivable crime. He had left for *love*.

"I can't go back home, Beverly." Will whispered.

Jimmy turned to Brian and then Beverly. "How long is Matthew's potion supposed to last anyway?"

"I don't know!" Beverly answered, earning a yelp from Jimmy. "I don't know how magic works."

Will shook his head. "Look I'm sorry for putting you all through this. I know it must not be easy keeping this secret from everyone else. I love Hannibal and if it were up to me, I'd never leave him for the rest of my days."

Beverly stared at her friend, studying everything he was saying.

"I'll see you all later." Will said, standing up and walking away from where his three friends watched him leave.

He was not there to hear the rest of their conversation.

🐚 ***Hannigram*** 🐚

"Hannibal and Simonetta are waiting for us at the venue." Chiyoh said once it got later. Will had just stayed in his room after heading back from Castiglioncello. He tried not to think about too much of what his friends had said.

Will nodded. "I'll get dressed."

Chiyoh was already prepared for the evening. She was wearing a silver dress with a turtleneck. In her hand was her black mask that she was about to tie around her head. Will smiled at her before heading into his room.

He approached the blue tuxedo and started getting dressed. Chiyoh had helped him with his tuxedo yesterday when they had went to the Uffizi Gallery so he had a clue about how it was supposed to go. Thankfully he was a quick learner.

Just like he had seen Chiyoh done for a moment, he took his mask and took the two ends of the ribbon and tied them behind his head. He took a look at himself in the long mirror in his room.

"Will, are you ready?" Chiyoh knocked once before entering his room. She smiled at how he appeared. "You look stunning, Will. Eyes will definitely be glued to you."

"Thank you, Chiyoh." Will thanked her.

Chiyoh grabbed his hand. "Come on. Simonetta sent a car for us. It's time to go."

Will followed Chiyoh as they exited the villa and entered a black car that was waiting for them. He sat in the back with Chiyoh. He had to clutch onto the seat belt. The whole concept of driving or a vehicle was still something his brain was taking time wrapping around.

The venue was in Livorno, Chiyoh had said. It was a gorgeous venue that had stunning painting inside it that she believed Hannibal would deeply appreciate.

It did not take long before the car had stopped and Chiyoh was leading him outside of the car. Once they exited, Will was greeted by so much. There was a big white building that had a

dome like shape. The lights nearby were well-lit for everyone to see. He noticed the many men and women dressed elegantly walking inside.

There was definitely going to be a crowd. He wondered what they were all celebrating.

"Come on, Will!" Chiyoh called out to him. The former merman quickly followed Chiyoh into the building, saying *Scusci* to everyone he accidentally pushed.

Once they entered, Will looked up at the ceiling in awe. On the walls there was some type of painting. He could see the blues of the ocean that was being painted along with green from seaweed and oranges and pinks for the coral down below. The blue sky along with its white puffy clouds were also interpreted on the walls.

One of the things about the paintings he noticed were the figures in the paintings. Women with long flowing hair with pearls and starfish crowning their heads. The women had colorful scales on their arms to their necks. Seashells were covering their chests. Then there were the unmistakable fish like tails they all had. It was were mermaids. Whoever painted the venue had thought of merfolk.

Maybe the painter had a deep appreciation for the ocean and what it could possibly hold?

"Chiyoh." Will turned when he heard a familiar woman's voice. He saw a man and woman dressed formally as they were in front of Chiyoh. "Thank you so much for inviting us."

Chiyoh smiled at the couple. "We're lucky you were able to attend, Signor and Signora Pazzi."

Pazzi! Will recognized that last name.

"Enjoy your evening." Chiyoh bid them as the couple walked away.

"That's the woman who found me on the beach..." Will said as he looked at the couple.

Chiyoh turned to him with narrowed eyes. "I forget...Signora Pazzi found you on the beach *naked*. You sounded so confused to her and Signor Pazzi even thought you were some crazy person...what had happened that day?"

Will did not realize until now that Chiyoh had never brought it up. It's not like she could tell her the truth. He did not know how she would react to hearing that he was some creature from under the sea.

Would she even believe him?

Will looked down to avoid Chiyoh's eyes when something caught his eye. He turned to the right and there, he saw *him*.

Hannibal stood there chatting with a man and woman. His tuxedo was different from Will's. His tuxedo jacket and trousers were a deep burgundy. His tuxedo shirt was white and his bowtie was maroon. His mask was a black velvet and satin type that was tied behind his head.

Will knew it was Hannibal even though he was wearing a mask. The silver-blonde locks falling down that Will wanted to touch. The lightly tanned complexion that Will wished to kiss.

He could also hear that deep voice that was music to his ears.

And then he turned to look at him and he knew who he was looking at. With a grin, Hannibal walked towards them.

"You see Chiyoh, I was right. Blue is most definitely Will's color." Hannibal said, taking Will's right hand. He stared into Will's eyes before noticing the sapphire ring he gave him. "You look beautiful, Will."

Will knew his breath had been taken away already. "Thank you, Hannibal. I see no matter what you're always looking handsome as always."

"You're too kind to me, amico mio." Hannibal squeezed Will's hand before letting it go.

"Chiyoh, Will, you two have made it!" Simonetta appeared, sending the two a bright smile. "Please, enjoy yourselves tonight."

"We will, Signora Simonetta." Chiyoh promised.

Simonetta turned to Hannibal. "Figlio, I think Roman Fell and his wife Lydia just arrived. Please greet them?"

"Sí, Mama." Hannibal gave his mother a small nod. Before leaving he turned to Will, "I'll see you later, Will."

Will smiled at him. He blushed at the thought of Hannibal giving him all his attention. His thoughts were interrupted when he heard Simonetta's voice.

"Signor Will, I have someone to introduce you to." Simonetta said with a friendly smile.

Will turned around to see a pretty blonde woman standing next to Simonetta. She was dressed in a long dark navy gown with gold embroidery and sequins. She wore a golden mask on her face.

"Will, this is Bedelia Du Maurier, Bedelia this is Will. He's a friend of Hannibal's." Simonetta introduced the two to each other.

Will extended his hand out for the woman to shake. "Piacere, Bedelia."

"It's nice to meet you too, Will." Bedelia took Will's hand and shook it it. "Are you one of Hannibal's acquaintances in his psychiatric circle?"

Will opened his mouth to reply, but Simonetta had beat him to it. "He's a fisherman of Portofino, but a friend of Hannibal's. It's a beautiful place, Bedelia. Once, Hannibal will have to take you."

"Are you a friend of his from school?" Will questioned. He knew nothing about Bedelia since this was the first time he had ever met the woman.

Simonetta and Bedelia shared a confused look. Chiyoh watched with a concerned look. Unbeknownst to everyone but Hannibal, she was the only one aware of Hannibal and Will's feelings for each other.

"Pardon us, Signora Simonetta and Bedelia." Chiyoh cut in, taking Will's hand in hers and dragging him away from the two women. For some reason, she did not want them to tell him who Bedelia was to Hannibal.

Simonetta and Bedelia did not mind much as they ended up conversing. Chiyoh pulled Will towards one of the tables.

"What's wrong, Chiyoh?" Will asked.

Chiyoh shook her head. "Just stay here, okay?" She grabbed a glass of wine from one of the waiters and handed it to Will. When she saw him take the glass with his right she noticed the

ring on his finger. A ring she knew the existence of. "Where did you get *that*?"

Will followed Chiyoh's gaze and he smiled when his eyes landed on the ring. "Hannibal gave it to me last night."

"What did he say about it?" Chiyoh queried.

Will placed the glass of wine on the table and touched the ring. "He said he wanted me to have it. A gift he can only give to me. One with so much meaning that no one could ever understand. He said it belonged to me and no one else."

Chiyoh sighed dejectedly when hearing Will's words. "It's an important ring, Will. Not just because it is for you, but it has been around for a long time."

Will looked up at Chiyoh and then down at the ring.

"Chiyoh!" It was Simonetta.

Chiyoh glanced back and then at Will. "Stay here, I'll be right back," she said before heading to wherever Simonetta was.

Will did as he was told and stayed sitting there at the table. He could hear a couple at the table in a deep conversation while sipping on their glasses of wine. Will took small sips here and there, but his attention was pulled by the couples dancing in the center of the room. They were all so close to each other. It seemed like an intimidate thing to do with someone else.

In a way, it made him think of when two mers intertwined their tails.

He noticed some couples staying and others being added to the center of the room. One couple he noticed in particular was a man in burgundy and a woman with a dress of golden embroidery.

It was Hannibal and Bedelia.

Will gulped as the two began dancing around the room with the other couples. He could see how close they got each step they took. There were smiles on their faces as well. Will felt icky inside when he spotted Hannibal's hand on Bedelia's waist as he held her close to him.

Why was he feeling this way?

Bedelia must be a friend of Hannibal's.

"Ah, I know you!" Will turned around when he heard a man talking to him. Will recognized him as one of Hannibal's acquaintances they ran into yesterday. Hannibal said he was an arrogant man who thrived on attention. "You're Hannibal's little friend."

Will sighed. "Hello Frederick." He was lucky to have remembered the man's name. "What brings you here?"

Frederick scoffed. "I was invited of course. Hannibal wanted to invite everyone to this celebratory event of his. I'd say he wanted to rub it in everyone's face if you ask me."

Will raised an eyebrow. "Rub *what* in everyone's face?"

"The fact that he will be a taken man. He won't be a bachelor no more. That his wife is a beautiful woman. That he has money - the list goes on, Will." Frederick rambled on.

Only one thing had stuck to Will's head.

That his wife is a beautiful woman.

Wife.

Hannibal's wife.

"Wife...?" Will could feel a different feeling settling within him.

Frederick narrowed his eyes at Will. "Yes...did you not know your friend was engaged?" Seeing he got no response from the other male, Frederick believed he must not have known. "Maybe he didn't want to make you feel bad. Whatever his reason, Bedelia will be Mrs. Hannibal Lecter sooner or later."

Will felt his heart break every time Frederick said something.

Hannibal was *engaged*! How long had he been engaged to Bedelia?

"No...it can't be..." Will wished it was not so.

Frederick eyed the couple. "If you don't believe me just look at them. They're dancing so closely and intimately so everyone knows they're together. How pathetic."

Will could not stand to listen to this anymore. He did not want to. He could not.

Without saying anything to Frederick, he got up from his seat and was about to make it to the entrance when he felt someone grab him. One hand held onto his right hand and another hand had an iron grip on his waist. Will struggled but the masked stranger waltzed him to the center of the room where everyone was dancing.

Will struggled a bit more, but he stopped when his eyes caught Hannibal and Bedelia.

Hannibal and Bedelia continued to dance around the room, some of the couples stopping to watch them. Frederick had been right. They were so close in each other's space. One would think you would have to be quite intimate with someone to be that close.

At the end of the dance, Hannibal dipped Bedelia. This caused everyone to cheer and clap loudly. Will felt his eyes go watery as Hannibal brought Bedelia back up, her hands clutching onto him and their eyes staring directly into each other's.

Will sniffled and felt the hands on him loosen. He could not stay here another moment. He ignored the tears that were slowly running down his cheeks as he ran towards the entrance.

He did not notice maroon eyes catch him running out of the building. Or the masked stranger following him.

Chapter End Notes

We had a little update on what's going on back at Primavera and Matthew is telling no one since he seems to have a plan of his own
And now Will knows about Bedelia😭😭😭
Hate seeing Hannigram in pain 😔😔😔
I hope you all enjoyed this update and until the next one which should be soon 💙💙💙💙💙💙🐚🐚🐚🐚🐚🐚

Ventitré

Chapter Summary

Another update!!!

Chapter Notes

WARNING: SUICIDAL THOUGHTS/AND ATTEMPT IN THIS CHAPTER.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

WARNING: SUICIDAL THOUGHTS/AND ATTEMPT IN THIS CHAPTER.

"I'm moments away from just searching for him myself!"

Alana frowned. "Jack, we are still searching for Will, I promise you that. I won't stop having him searched for until we find him."

"I don't know where he could have gone." Margot said with disbelief as she shook her head.

Bella was there too, looking devastated about the whole thing. "I still can't believe it. He should be here. I can't believe Matthew knew nothing."

Just as Alana was about to say something, three mers she knew all too well were swimming swiftly inside the throne room. It was Beverly, Jimmy and Brian.

"Alana, Margot..." Beverly turned to look at Jack and Bella too. "We have something to confess..."

Margot eyed the three mers. "What is it?"

"Is it about Will? Have you found him?" Jack questioned, Bella and he having hopeful eyes.

Jimmy turned to Beverly and then Brian. "We know where he is."

"We've *known*, actually." Brian corrected Jimmy.

Jack's face contorted to anger. "What do you mean you've known?!"

Bella placed a hand on her husband's shoulder. "Stop, Jack. Just let them talk. There's no point in making a fuss *now*."

"Tell us." Alana said.

Beverly began. "Matthew played a big part in it."

"WHAT?!" Jack raised his voice.

Beverly shuddered at hearing Jack's enraged tone. She continued though. "He made a potion to give a mer human legs! He made it for Will and since Will for some reason has an appreciation towards humans-"

"Something we'll never understand." Jimmy inputted.

"He drank it." Beverly finished.

Alana placed her hands over her mouth. "He went up to the surface...he can be *anywhere*."

Beverly shook her head. "Not necessarily. He wanted to go to see his human friend, Hannibal. That's all he wanted. You see he's in-" The mermaid stopped herself from continuing, but Alana and Margot looked at her, knowing exactly what she was going to say.

"There must be a way we can get him back, there must..." Bella cried.

Alana sighed. "Matthew must be dealt with. We also need Will back too. Matthew, as the Magic Keeper, has full control over the potion."

"What do you mean?" Jimmy asked.

"It means since he was the one who made the potion he has control over its power. He can take Will's human legs away whenever he so pleases." Margot informed them.

Bella tilted her head. "...Why did he not give Will his tail back sooner?"

Beverly eyed Alana as Bella waited for an answer. It was clear that Alana had a clue.

Will had went through all the trouble to go see Hannibal and clearly had not returned as soon as possible. Will had went to find the human he had known for years and grown close to. The human he had befriended and was forbidden to see.

He had only wanted to go see Hannibal and nothing or no one else.

Will loved Hannibal, as crazy as it sounded.

"It doesn't matter. We're bringing them both back." Alana stated. She looked towards her wife. "Margot, stay here. I'll go with them to get Will and Matthew back."

Jack turned to Bella. "Stay here too, love. We'll come back with Will, I promise." Bella embraced her husband.

Margot pecked her wife's lips. "Be careful, Alana. It's clear we can't trust Matthew so...please be cautious."

"I will." Alana promised before taking a spear. She looked towards Jack, Beverly, Jimmy and Brian. "Let's bring Will back home."

🐚 *Hannigram* 🐚

Will was coming back home.

Alana felt thrilled about the fact. She knew Will would come back to them eventually. Well, if she was being specific Will was necessarily returning to Primavera. If anything, they were going to bring him back.

It did not matter. Will was coming back and that's what was important.

The others were waiting for her outside of the palace. She had decided to make her way towards Matthew's magic room. She knew nothing of magic, so she doubted there would be anything there to help her out. It did not matter. Matthew was going to have to obey the queen.

It was when she entered the room when she noticed another mer was in there. She saw a mermaid with short blonde hair and a light blue tail. When the mermaid turned around, Alana recognized her.

"Crazy Katherine...?" Alana scolded herself internally for actually saying that. Her mother would have scolded her too since it was not something nice to say.

The older mermaid bowed her head. "Good evening, Your Majesty. If you don't mind me, I'll be on my-" Katherine was about to leave until Alana moved to block the entrance.

"What are you doing here?" Alana questioned the older mermaid.

Katherine simply grinned. "Whenever the *Magic Keeper* is away, I borrow some of his things."

"Borrow?" Alana wondered. Why would Katherine have any use for anything magical? She was a mer who had a booth of human items. What would she need it for? "Why would you need..." Only someone who knew magic would find any use for the things in there. "You know magic?"

Katherine shrugged. "Before I moved to Primavera, I was an apprentice to another Magic Keeper of another kingdom. I liked to make potions to help ease the pain other mers endure."

If Katherine knew magic, maybe she could help Alana out. "How much magic do you know?"

"A good amount. Why?" Katherine seemed interested now.

It had just been an idea. Or rather a silly thought.

Will had sacrificed everything to go be with his human. What if...the human sacrificed everything he had to be with Will?

"A potion can be made to give a mer human legs, correct?" Alana wanted to make sure the older mermaid can comprehend what she was trying to say.

Katherine giggled. "Well dear, there's spells for turning mers into sea stars. Magic can do anything...of course except for the three *can'ts."*

"And potions can be made permanent right? So that...even the Magic Keeper had no control anymore?" Alana asked.

"Yes dear, that's possible. The question is...what kind of potion do you need?" Katherine grinned.

Alana turned back. She had a little bit of time to spare, but she could not leave until she had this potion.

"One that can change a human to a mer."

🐚 ***Hannigram*** 🐚

"Will, stop!" The former merman had left the venue and was not planning on stopping even though the one he loved was the one begging him to.

He had no choice when Hannibal grabbed his wrist and spun him around to face him. "I'm...I'm so sorry. I wanted to tell you, I-"

"I can't believe it..." Will muttered as he stood there with Hannibal. He did not think he would ever feel so hurt and mad. "You were engaged! How...why didn't you tell me?!"

Hannibal's own eyes were becoming watery. He knew at some point this would have come up, but he had no right way to tell the one he truly wanted.

"Will, I...I didn't know how to tell you." Hannibal said truthfully. He did not know what to say.

Will turned to him. "*Will, I'm engaged* would have sufficed!" He felt all these emotions within him and he just felt like drowning in the ocean. Anything to let the pain stop. "You...I thought..."

The former merman did not even know what to say. Undoubtedly his emotions were calling the shots, but he did not mind.

"How long?" Will asked.

Hannibal sighed. "The day you were dragged back into the ocean...my mother told me about the arrangement and I accepted it."

Will took a step back. It was not so long ago when that had happened. "She was just a stranger to you...? You're going to marry a complete stranger?"

Kind of like your case to be honest, Will thought. He had known nothing about Matthew at all.

"Humans don't marry for love, Will. Or rather, not all of us do." Hannibal said bitterly. "Some of us are obliged to follow along with certain arrangements."

"Lies!" Will sniffled, his tears falling down his face. "You still had a choice, Hannibal! You agreed to that. You chose to go along with it just like you chose to keep it from me!"

Hannibal stepped closer to Will. "Do you think it was easy for me to accept? Do you think it was something I wanted? To settle for someone I can *never* love because my heart belongs to another?"

Will could see the tears cascading down Hannibal's own face. He would have never anticipated that they would ever argue, yet here they were.

Here they were shouting at each other.

Hannibal approached Will, caressing his cheek. "You think I want to be with Bedelia? Do you think my heart can ever be hers when it was taken by someone else years ago?"

Will looked down to avoid eye contact with those maroon eyes.

Hannibal used his other free hand to raise up Will's right hand where he wore the ring. "I could not give this to her because I did not love her. My grandfather gave this to my grandmother as my father gave it to my mother. A ring of genuine love. A ring I could give only to the person I yearned for."

Will blinked away his tears.

Even with legs, he could not have Hannibal.

Hannibal was going to marry Bedelia and the idea of them marrying was as hard as imagining being there for the event. Will knew he would die of heartbreak if he had to watch such a sight. He felt like even now he was losing the will to continue on knowing he could have never had Hannibal.

Why was the universe so cruel?

"It seems like fate has spoken." Will muttered, taking his hand back from Hannibal. He slipped off the ring and shoved it in Hannibal's hand. "I can't..."

"Will-"

Will said nothing more and ran from the venue and Hannibal. He did not steal another glance as he got further and further from the place.

🐚 ***Hannigram*** 🐚

He was conflicted. He had no idea what to do as he watched the one he loved run from him.

Hannibal knew he should have told Will, how could he have not? Now Will was angry at him and he could not blame him for reacting that way. He had no clue that he was engaged to someone else. How unfortunate that Will had come not long after he proposed.

Would he still have proposed to Bedelia if Will had come before?

Hannibal would have left Will alone to let him blow off steam, but he did not want to leave him alone. Maybe they could talk about this more? It's not like anything would change though, would it?

"Hannibal!" He turned around to see Chiyoh exit the building. She was the only one but him outside as far as he knew. "What happened? Where's Will?"

Hannibal frowned. "He knows, Chiyoh."

"I'm assuming he was not thrilled to hear about that." Chiyoh did not know how Will was going to find out, but she knew the person he should hear it from was Hannibal. "Where did he go?"

"To the beach." Hannibal replied.

"Are you going to go after him?" Chiyoh questioned.

Hannibal thought it would have been hard to decide, but he knew his answer. He could not leave Will by himself. They had to talk about this. Emotions were going to cloud their senses since it was so much.

"Yes. I'm going to talk to him. Don't wait up on us. Once the party is over, head home. I'll be back, okay?" Hannibal did not know how long this would take and if Will would even want to go back with him.

Chiyoh nodded. "Okay...just, be honest with him?"

"Of course I will." Hannibal replied, turning to follow Will. All Chiyoh could was hope things worked out for the two.

🐚 *Hannigram* 🐚

Was there truly never a time Hannibal and he could have had each other?

There had been those intimate moments that felt like were the perfect moment for them to kiss. The perfect time for them to deepen their friendship.

Will could not have Hannibal if had his tail because Hannibal was a human.

Will could not have Hannibal if he had legs because Hannibal was engaged to Bedelia.

He could just never have Hannibal.

Those words kept replaying in his head as he kept running far from the venue. He knew exactly where he was going even though his tears blurred his vision. Once he felt the difference of the ground he knew he had made it to his destination.

Will took a deep breath as he walked closer and closer to the ocean. He nearly removed his socks and shoes so his feet could feel the warmth of the sand, but he was too busy feeling heartbroken.

He fell to his knees once he made it to that one spot.

The spot where he first met Hannibal. The same spot where they would always meet. Endless conversions about so many things. Will could never get bored the maroon-eyed human he loved.

The tears fell down his cheeks as he sobbed softly. He buried his hands into the sand as the events just kept repeating in his mind.

Seeing how close Hannibal and Bedelia were. It looked like they could have kissed.

Hearing Frederick say that Bedelia was going to be Hannibal's wife.

Hannibal admitting that it was true and that one day he would marry Bedelia.

"Why...why..." Will cried out.

He sniffled when he felt his right hand feel something under the sand. It felt a little long and hard. Notably it was cold too. Will grabbed the object and pulled it from under the sand.

It was a scalpel.

A scalpel like the ones Hannibal had always used to sharpen his charcoal pencils. Will could even spot the little black dust of the charcoal pencil on the blade. Hannibal must have forgotten it recently.

Had it been recent enough to when he knew he was going to marry Bedelia?

Will glanced at the scalpel in his hand. Hannibal said he used it because it sharpened his charcoal pencils the best. It made it better for when he sketched. In a way, the scalpel nearly reminded him of the fishing hooks and harpoons all mers were to fear.

If done right, the scalpel could likely do damage to someone.

Perhaps it could kill someone.

Will placed his other free hand where his heart was.

What point was there to living anymore? Yes, he had his family and friends back home, but why would they want him after they knew everything he had done? Could they even accept him for falling in love with a human? That had to be some type of major disgrace to the mers.

Besides, all they had done was decided to arrange a bond with a stranger for him.

A bond Will did not want.

Hannibal and he could never be together. They were both a part of two different worlds that were never made to collide. Even with Bedelia out the picture, what type of life could Hannibal and he ever have? The only time they could see each other is at Castiglioncello and their loved ones would never accept their relationship.

Will had fallen in love with someone he should have fallen in love with. Fate had clearly told him that enough.

There was nothing to live for. Soon enough, Hannibal would be married to Bedelia. Will had no place for any world anymore.

He raised his arm with the scalpel and nearly brought it down when someone grabbed his wrist to stop him. That was unexpected. Will expected it to be Hannibal. He glanced up and saw someone he was not anticipating.

"Hello Will." It was Matthew. Matthew with his own pair of human legs.

"M-Matthew?" Will was not expecting the merman to have come on land.

Matthew held a tight grip on Will's wrist. "You cannot kill yourself, Will. I won't let you."

Will tried pulling his wrist out of Matthew's hold. "Let me go, Matthew! You don't understand."

"No Will, *you* don't understand." He pulled Will up from the sand and held him close. "Did you forget? You were arranged to be *mine*."

Will groaned. He had never accepted the bond so Matthew did not know what he was talking about. "I never agreed to anything, Matthew. I don't care if Jack or Alana arranged it. I'm not bonding with you."

Matthew angrily stared at Will. "That's where you're wrong. You're mine. I'm not letting you kill yourself because you belong to me. No one else. That human? Nope. You're MINE."

Will struggled a bit more, trying to get away from Matthew. "Let go! Matthew, stop it!"

"Let him go!" Both mermen turned to see Hannibal standing a few feet away from them. Will did not know whether be relieved or surprised that Hannibal was there.

Chapter End Notes

No one mess with Hannibal and Will 😤
Also Alana has got something up her sleeves since she asked for that potion
Hope you enjoyed and another update will be released today again🥰🥰🥰

Ventiquattro

Chapter Summary

Update time 🥰

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

The sight of the man holding onto Will while the blue eyed man was clearly struggling told Hannibal all he needed to know. He had thought to just let Will go and calm himself down. He knew Will was angry and that maybe the next day they could talk things out. He did not want things to end so badly between them even though he felt like it was all his fault.

He chased Will to see where he would end up. It broke his heart seeing Will at Castiglioncello, but he could see why he had gone to the beach. He was not expecting to see Will being seized by some random man.

Hannibal was not going to let anyone talk to the way the man talked to Will.

"Release him this instant or else." Hannibal said in a threatening tone as he sent the man a death glare.

The man scoffed. "You have no power over me, pathetic human. I don't even understand why Will would ever see anything in *you!* You're not worthy of him."

"You're not wrong about that. I'm not perfect and there are things I could've done different," Hannibal said, sending Will a sad smile. He then glanced back at the other man with anger. "Neither of us are worthy of him. How dare you calm him yours as if he were some object?"

"He is mine! He is meant to be mine not yours!" The other man shouted, frustrated that no one seemed to get his point.

Hannibal disagreed. "Will belongs to no one. Not the mers, not the humans. Not me and not to you."

"You're wrong." The other man said.

The only words he could bother listening to were Hannibal's as he continued struggling.

He knew Hannibal would never treat him like some little object to keep for himself. Will had seen it when he was in Florence. Hannibal did not mind letting everyone knew about his newly arrived friend from Portofino. He did not mind Chiyoh and Simonetta getting to know him either.

Hannibal did not want to keep him locked up for only himself to see. Will had been able to explore so much with Hannibal. It made him sad to think of the possibility that he would never get the chance to do that again.

To wander the city of Florence with Hannibal. Or to simply just be with Hannibal.

He tried not to think about everything he wanted and could have had if only fate had decided it. It was heartbreaking to him to think that Hannibal and he were so different fate would rather them be a part than together.

No. He could not think about it.

Will cleared his head as he continued to struggle in Matthew's grasp. He felt foolish for not thinking of Matthew when it came to this little deal. He had been too distracted by the thought of being with Hannibal on land to even consider everything that was entailed.

Then again, just because Will took the potion did not mean he had agreed to anything. It's not like Matthew had told him, *"By the way, I'll give you this potion as long as you agree to do this and that."* Matthew had told him magic could give him human legs and he could see Hannibal and that was it.

If there were other intentions he had, Matthew did not make it known to him.

Will eyed the scalpel he still held in his right hand. He would have used it to end his own life, but perhaps now was when it could be of use. He refused to give Matthew any chance to do anything else. Will stabbed Matthew's hand with the scalpel, causing the male to yelp in pain and retract his hand.

Once Matthew's hand was off him, Will shoved him away and began running in Hannibal's direction. When they were near each other, Hannibal grabbed his hand and they both started running.

They were still on the beach when Will felt a burning sensation all over his legs. He could not even stand or walk with the feeling that he ended up falling to the sand. He could hear the sound of material ripping and the burning fading away. He tried to move his legs, but there was no movement. He looked at his legs when he gasped.

His legs were gone, but his tail was back.

"Will!" Hannibal called out to him with concern.

Matthew was slowly approaching him, the scalpel having been pulled out of his hand and abandoned where he had been. Matthew was cackling loudly as if Hannibal and Will were the biggest fools in the world.

"See, human? Even Mother Nature won't let you two be together. How can a merman and human ever be together?" Matthew said with a devilish smirk.

Hannibal was about to bend down and help Will, but then Matthew used his magic to levitate a nearby rock and fling it directly at the side of Hannibal's head causing him to fall to the

sand.

"Hannibal!" Will shouted as he extended his hand as if to try and grab Hannibal who was unconscious on the sand.

Even though he had a puncture would in his hand, Matthew was stronger and dragged Will closer and closer towards the ocean. All Will could do was shout and struggle.

Hannibal was knocked out due to Matthew. What if he was hurt in any way? Would this be the last time he would ever see him?

Will kept his eyes on Hannibal's unconscious figure until he was taken in by the water. He tried using his hands to remove Matthew's arms off of him, but he could not even move his hands. He looked down to see they were bonded tightly by seaweed.

"I'm not ever letting you escape, Will. This whole experience of letting you go see your little human friend was warning enough for me." Matthew said, now back in his merman form.

Will was about to protest when he was interrupted.

"Matthew!" The two mermen turned their heads, not expecting to see five mers waiting there for them.

Will felt relieved to see his friends and Jack there.

Chapter End Notes

So I don't know how I feel about the delivery on this chapter especially how Matthew causes Hannibal to knock out - some how that part was hard for me to figure out it would play out and I was overthinking it too much at that point so I wrote it the way I did. There are definitely gonna be parts in our stories that we probably wished would have come out differently and those are just flaws a part of the story.
Either way, like I said this chapters are gonna keep coming because there is a lot done and only three chapters left to complete and those are gonna be finished quick because there's like the other half that just needs to be written out

So....
I think I will be able to actually finish this before the year finishes like I had set my goal to which makes me extremely happy
There are probably gonna be more than one chapter being released after this throughout the day so stay tuned for those ones
Our journey is not finished yet 🥰🥲💙💙💙💙💙💙💙💙💙

Venticinque

Chapter Summary

> So just a brief note I had to add something to Ventitré it's a small addition but it had to be added since it's mentioned in a later chapter and it would have just been confusing but it was necessary so it is in Ventiré you'll notice it but is is a small part so it wasn't a drastic addition to be honest
> Like I promised, more updates are being released today so stay tuned for them 🥰🥰🥰🥰

Chapter Notes

> **WARNING:**
>
> **GRAPHIC DESCRIPTION OF VIOLENCE (it may not be so graphic but just a warning)**

See the end of the chapter for more notes

"Matthew, release Will this instant!" Alana demanded as she looked directly at Matthew. Her friends had told her everything she needed to know.

One thing she did know for certain was that Matthew was the one who made Will the potion and gave it to him to drink. She wanted to believe Matthew had possibly offered it to Will, but she did not know that part of the story.

It did not matter though. If Matthew could make this all happen, which to her is risking her friend's life, there is no way she would let anyone agree to this bond arrangement.

"Will was forbidden to have any interactions with humans and to be allowed to head back to the surface. *You* enabled him, Matthew, which I find dangerous and a risk to his life." Alana could see why Will had agreed to this, but she was not going to forgive Matthew. She was most definitely going to scold Will later too.

Jack spoke up. "As his caretaker, I refuse the bond arrangement. You can ask him yourself he does not want it and you letting him do this, Matthew, makes you unsuitable for him."

Matthew gasped, offended by their words. "Oh, is that so? My mating gift to Will was giving him the potion to see his little friend which I take it as he accepting the arrangement. He was very intrigued by humans for so long and I gave him something no other mer could!"

"You never said that!" Will protested. He would not have accepted the potion if Matthew had made that clear, right? Or would he have been too desperate to see Hannibal to just agree to it all?

Jimmy glared at Matthew. "How dare you? We trust you to be a good life mate for Will just for you to put him in danger!"

"You think I'm going to let you take Will from me? He is to be my mate!" Matthew exclaimed. He would promise them that if they had remained still.

🐚 *Hannigram* 🐚

There was a small groan that escaped his lips as he slowly gained consciousness. He could feel his head ache a bit from where it had been hit. Instinctively, he brought a hand up to his forehead until he could feel blood on his head. He would have to get that checked, but only after he knew what was going on.

With all the strength he could muster up, Hannibal rose from the sand and looked around to search for Will and that man that had been trying to take him away. Who was that man? When he had spotted them talking he believed there was a possibility they knew each other, but Hannibal could not be certain.

The man laughed when Will had regained his tail and had wanted Will as a mate. He did slowly recall that conversation. That man was most definitely a former merman like Will. Hannibal did not doubt he must have been the key to Will receiving his legs.

He could not see either of them anywhere which made him panic. It was when he saw footprints in the sand when he was relieved a bit. He followed them and that's when he could see a little bit of what was happening below the water.

There were other mers and they each had spears. He could see Will a bit, his wrists bounded by what looked like seaweed. Suddenly the other mers were not there, but Will and the other man still were.

Hannibal had caught sight of something.

There was an object that looked like a spear that had made its way to the sand. He took it in his hand and eyed the other man who was too close to Will.

He could remember the time Will asked him why he never came in to swim. He nearly wanted to join Will in the ocean that time.

The last time he had been in the water, Mischa and his father were still alive. It was summertime of the year his sister died when he last entered the water. Both of then always swam together. Her not being here made it much different.

This was important though.

It all had to do with Will.

Will was important to him and he needed to do something.

So, Hannibal took a deep breath, held onto the spear and went into the water.

🐚 ***Hannigram*** 🐚

Matthew was more than prepared when the other mers began aiming to hurt him. He was not an idiot. He knew what he was doing. Ever since he had looked at Will, he knew that was the mer he wanted to spend the rest of his life with. There was just something intriguing about the mer and Matthew wanted to know everything about him.

Did Will like human objects? Yes. Did he find that weird? No, not at all. He believed everyone was fascinated by *something*. Magic had deeply interested him and it always had. It was going to be the thing that got him what he wanted: Will.

Beverly was the first one to strike. She had been too ambitious by swimming towards him. All he had to do was flick his wrist while reciting a spell in his head when Beverly was replaced by a purple sea star floating down to the sea floor, her spear abandoned.

Will gasped. He was beginning to see how truly powerful Matthew was.

Jimmy, Brian and Jack went to attack the same time. Will watched fearfully as his adoptive father and friends try to successfully harm Matthew. The Magic Keeper was smart and fast though. He had used the same spell on Jack, turning the emerald tailed merman into a green crab.

"Jack!" Will called out, his eyes getting watery.

Alana watched as Jimmy and Brian kept trying to attack Matthew with their spears. She held up her own spear and was about to aim when Matthew turned Brian into a light green seahorse.

Will kept trying to get out of his bounds, but he was unsuccessful. If only he could grab one of the spears with his hands, but he had no free hands. He kept moving his tail to try to make Jack, Beverly or now Brian's spear coke closer to him, but one of them had made its way near the surface.

Jimmy was putting up a good fight, Matthew smirked. He was arrogant and knew that none of them could stand his power. It was cruel to let them think they could win, but giving them a good fight was harmless. Or so he thought.

Right after Matthew turned Jimmy into a clownfish, Alana had thrown her spear believing her aim to be good. Matthew winced when he felt pain at the upper part of his left arm. He placed his right hand over where he was bleeding. Within seconds and a flick of his wrist with the spell in his mind, Alana was one second a mermaid and then a red jellyfish.

"Finally." Matthew sighed in relief as he stared at the five now sea creatures floating around in the water. He thought he saw a little bottle near a rock, but he paid no mind to it. It was probably something one of the humans from above had thrown into the ocean.

"Matthew, turn them back! Stop this, please." Will cried out. By now he had stopped struggling in his bounds. He thought the worst thing could have been being forced to be bonded with someone he did not love, but he did not like seeing what Matthew had done to his friends. It sucked to thing that only Matthew could be the ones to turn them back.

Matthew swam towards Will, his back facing where they had come from on Castiglioncello. "They were trying to take you away from me, Will. Your human friend would have happily taken you away from me too. I won't let them take you from me."

"I'm not yours to keep." Will gritted his teeth, remembering Hannibal's words.

Will belongs to no one. Not the mers, not the humans. Not me and not to you.

"I'm not some object you can trap and keep away from everyone." Will stated boldly.

Matthew shook his head. "That's where you're wrong, Will. You are meant to be *my* life mate. I'm going to make everyone who would dare try to keep us a part sorry."

"No..." Will muttered.

"And don't think I'm going to spare that human of yours." Matthew said, turning to glance back at the beach and then back at Will. "You will be my mate."

Will would have protested if he did not see Matthew's body jerk weirdly. The merman himself was confused to, but then Will saw it. There was red oozing from where his heart was. Coming right out of Matthew's flesh was end of a spear.

He would have questioned what had happened when he saw a familiar face right behind Matthew.

A pair of maroon eyes he loved.

Chapter End Notes

Hope you enjoyed 💙💙💙💙

Ventisei

Chapter Summary

WARNING:

GRAPHIC DESCRIPTION OF VIOLENCE (it may not be so graphic but just a warning)

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Hannibal dragged the squirming man out. Luckily he had not removed the spear at all, but he spotted something else that would be helpful. He noticed his scalpel - the blade still soaked in Matthew's blood - was lying there on the sand.

Matthew was still struggling a bit, but Hannibal could see he was beginning to weaken more. Hannibal nothing much about merfolk anatomy, but he knew plenty about human anatomy. The spear was still through where he guessed Matthew's heart would be and soon enough he would be dead.

Hannibal used one free hand to snatch the scalpel. He took the blade to Matthew's neck and slit it. The human looked down to see blood ooze out of the wound. This would definitely fasten the process.

Believing his job done, Hannibal shoved the body into the water. Some other animal would feast from it. If he kept it here it would be a fiasco. It was already hard enough that he had blood all over him.

Hannibal took a glance at the water before taking a seat in the sand. He took a deep breath and looked up at the night sky. He had told Chiyoh that he was going to get Will and that he would be back later. He did not expect how long this would take and he knew Chiyoh and his mother were probably a bit worried.

He would not leave yet. Not until Will came back.

And so, he waited for his merman.

Will sighed in relief once he saw all his friends and Jack turning back to their original forms especially now that Matthew was dead. It made sense all the magic he had been responsible for before would have stopped working once his life had been taken. It was unfortunate that someone's life had been lost, but then again he was a crazy merman.

"Oh my gosh..." Jimmy had a hand over his face. "I would have never ever ever in my entire life expected to be turned Info a clownfish!"

Beverly rolled her eyes. "Cool it, Jimmy. You weren't the only one turned into something else."

"You three are okay?" Jack grabbed his spear and eyed the three.

Brian nodded. "We're fine, Jack. The next time I see that pathetic worm I'm going to-" The merman was disturbed when something floated down into the water. All the mers gasped when they saw it was Matthew's corpse just slowly floating down in the water.

"Gross!" Jimmy exclaimed, swimming closely towards Brian, hiding behind his back.

Alana glanced up to see someone watching. "Your human killed him."

Will glanced at Matthew's corpse. "Hannibal had done something none of us were able to. Matthew wouldn't have stopped until everyone stopped trying to *steal me from him*."

"At least no one has to deal with him anymore." Jack said with relief.

Will glanced up to see Hannibal. He noticed the human move from the water. He was guessing he was sitting on the sand waiting.

"We're all thankful for your...friend, Will." Alana began. She looked to the others who were in a small conversation, likely in disbelief that just moments ago they were regular sea creatures. "He had done an honorable thing."

Will eyeballed Matthew's corpse that was waiting to be dealt with. "What will become of his body?"

"Some animal will finish it off. I'm not too concerned about it, to be honest. How did this all happen in the first place? Beverly said she didn't make it in there with the others until after Matthew had given you the potion." Alana was curious about the rest of the story.

Will sighed, reminiscing the moment he was given the opportunity to visit the human world. "Well, I was in the room with him like you left us. He was just talking about magic when he

suddenly brought up that it could do so much, including giving a mer human legs. He knew about Hannibal and that we were good friends.

I told him I'd like to have that chance to see him and so he...he made the potion. He didn't tell me that there was any catch. The others had entered and tried to stop me, but...I wanted to see Hannibal. I needed to see him. I took a chance and they helped me get to the beach."

Alana pursed her lips before continuing. "I didn't understand before why you cared about him so much. Some random human you met when you were a kid. I kept telling you that one day you'd meet your future life mate. I didn't think that...you had met then already."

Will widened his eyes. He was not expecting her to figure out the truth and speak it so calmly.

"Trust me, when I came to this conclusion I thought I was crazy, but-" Alana stopped and swam away for a moment to approach a little rock. She picked up a bottle of glowing blue liquid. "You're my friend. Your happiness and safety is what I care about. I thought you'd have that with Matthew, but clearly I was wrong."

When Alana extended her hand to give Will the bottle, he hesitantly took it. "What's this?"

"Before we left Primavera, I visited Matthew's room. You remember Crazy Katherine, right?" Alana waited for Will to answer.

How could Will ever forget? It was at her booth he was first interested in human items. "Yeah...of course."

"Well, she knows magic. Since Matthew gave you a pathway to the human world, we were going to have to imprison him making him no longer the Magic Keeper of Primavera. I asked her to make a potion before I left with the others. Matthew said there was a way a mer can have human legs. Katherine told me there's a way to give someone a mer tail. There was also a potion to make either of these permanent too." Alana informed her friend who looked astonished at everything that was pouring out of her mouth.

Will eyeballed the bottle. "This can make a human...a mer?"

Alana nodded. "I had her add the permanence to that potion. Jack told me about everything you said when Bella and he lectured you. I didn't get it at first, but then things seemed to click after Beverly said all you wanted was to see Hannibal. You'd rather just see him than see what else the human world had to offer. It was hard thinking all these years you were friends with a human, but you weren't wrong.

You have always been safe and happy. I see it now that if he wanted to hurt you he would have done so long ago and he didn't. He never wanted to hurt you and I believe he never will. I don't doubt he's made you happy. You're in love with him, Will. You always have been and you always will be. I don't know how, but maybe fate decided a mer can have a human for a life mate."

Everything Alana said was true.

Would Hannibal want to live in his world? Would he want to live the life of a merman? Could Will even make him choose?

"You want to be with him. I was thinking maybe *this* option might work." Alana said, placing a hand on Will's shoulder.

"Alana, I don't know what to say..." He did not. A part of him was telling himself to not even return to Hannibal and give him this option. He feared being rejected, but he also feared the possibility that Hannibal would be pressured to taking the potion.

"Don't say anything to me. This is me making things right. You don't even have to thank me. Just go talk to him." Alana said, gesturing at the surface.

Will gave her a small nod. He turned and swam back to the surface while holding onto the little bottle securely.

Chapter End Notes

Matthew is no longer someone they need to deal with anymore at least 😬
More updates to come 💙💙💙💙💙

Ventisette

Chapter Summary

🥲🥲🥲🥲

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

It all felt like the neverending cycle that he had once loved. Hannibal would sit there on the beach waiting for him to show up. He would swim up to the surface to see the only human he knew and trusted.

This time around Hannibal had blood on his hands. This time Will had gotten to meet other humans and see what the human world was like. They were no longer children visiting each other every summer. They were now adults with other plans for the future.

Will found Hannibal where he always found him. Sitting down in the sand waiting for him. It almost felt like a regular summer day, except it was not.

"Will!" Hannibal spotted him.

Will smiled. "Hannibal..." He noticed some washed up seaweed. He hid the little bottle in the clump of seaweed. He did not want Hannibal seeing just yet. "Are you okay?"

Hannibal chuckled. "I just killed a merman...I don't know what I am right now. He's dead though and that is a good thing because now there's not some merman trying to forcibly keep you."

"Yeah..." Will said. He moved so he could sit right next to Hannibal. "I'm sorry you had to go through that. I blame myself for you having to do that."

"You don't need to say sorry about anything, Will." Hannibal argued. He genuinely did not blame Will. "Mind telling me all about him though?"

Will frowned. He almost wished he would have never met Matthew but then again he would have never got the chance to see the human world or be with Hannibal.

"He was Magic Keeper of Primavera. Since I'm at the age to mate and settle down, they thought the only way to keep me from coming back to the surface was arranging me to bond with a merman. Matthew had some interest in me apparently so my friend Alana told Jack about him.

We were arranged to be life mates, but...I never loved him. I went to see him because I was being supervised. I did not want to meet him because nothing would change the way I truly felt. I could never feel anything towards him."

Hannibal raised an eyebrow. "Would you have ever bonded with him?"

Will thought for a moment. It had been what everyone wanted him to do, but he was unsure if he could have ever gone through with it.

How could he?

There was no point in being with someone else because he would never feel the way he felt for Hannibal.

"I don't think I would've..." Will confessed, turning to look at Hannibal. "I think I would've ran away. Maybe move to another mer kingdom...go elsewhere."

Hannibal scoffed. "Your tough so I'm not surprised it you would have."

"In a way, I kind of did." Will admitted thinking about the whole situation.

"Yeah."

For a moment there was just comfortable silence between them as they sat there in the dark.

Will peeked at the corner of his eye to still see the little bottle and the seaweed. He had questions he wanted answers to and he would have just decided to sit there with Hannibal if he could.

He could not though.

"Hannibal?" Will broke the silence as they both sat their sitting on the sand.

Hannibal did not turn to look at the merman. He kept his eyes on the horizon. "Yes Will?"

"Do you love Bedelia? In any way?" Will thought he was a fool for asking such a question. He knew he would be heartbroken if Hannibal said yes. Hannibal was a human and if he stayed on land, he could always go and be with her.

Hannibal sighed. "Years ago, when Bedelia and I were just children, my father and her father were friends. They thought since they had children around the same age, why not arrange something between them? They were friends so thought it was a good idea. I don't know if my father would have changed his mind if I had told him I fell in love with someone else. I don't even know how my mother would react.

"My mother...she still holds onto memories. She knew of the arrangement and since it was one of her husband's wishes she thought...it'd be best if one of them were listened to. I thought it made sense to. My mother wanted me to be happy. She wanted to see me married. Her only shot of grandchildren was probably another motivation of hers. I could not deny my

mother anything and...I thought I could never have the one I wanted so I agreed. So no, Will, I do not love Bedelia at all."

"There's only one person I love, Will, and person is you." Hannibal said, placing his hand on Will's face.

Out of everything Hannibal had said, all Will could focus on was how the whole arrangement was decided by someone else. Hannibal did have a choice, but it did not help the fact that it was something both his parents wanted.

Will knew how much Hannibal loved his mother. He had heard it for so many years and after being able to step onto land, he had seen how much mother and son cared about each other. It was a beautiful thing and he would hate for it to be ruined.

He would hate to be the one to ruin any of it.

Will eyed the little bottle hiding with the seaweed. Alana had been kind enough to do this for him. It would truly make things easier. Hannibal would live in his world as a mer. They would have forever with each other their whole lives.

They could mate and have children if they wanted.

That was if Will was not being persuaded by a different voice in his head. Would Hannibal give up all he had on land to be with him underwater? He had so much. Hannibal wanted to be a psychiatrist, he loved visiting the Uffizi Gallery and he loved attending the opera. There were other things he loved too. Will was not sure he could take that from him.

There was a possibility Hannibal would resent him for the rest of their lives for stealing him away from his human life.

He did not want Hannibal to choose him or his family.

Will turned to directly face Hannibal, his eyes becoming watery. He knew what he had to do. "Mattew was right about one thing...Mother Nature won't let us to be together."

Hannibal gulped, wanting to say something but unable to find the words. "Will..."

"You've seen it, Hannibal. All the times we try to come together just for it to be ruined by something or someone. Fate has spoken. It wants something different for the both of us." Will said, letting the tears fall from his eyes.

Hannibal wanted to say something, but all he could do was look at Will as if he blinked then his beloved would disappear.

Will looked down at the ring that was still on his finger. Hannibal said it would always belong to him. He was beginning to see what it had all meant.

He was about to take it off when Hannibal stopped him. "It's yours forever, Will. Keep it...my heart belongs to you and keep it to remember me."

Will did not move to remove the ring. "You're the only one I'll ever love and want. I'll live for the rest of my life alone and I will love no other because you have my heart. You always have and you always will. I could *never* forget you." Will said, he brought his face closer and so did Hannibal.

All it took was two seconds and their lips touched. Finally, they had kissed each other.

Will had always dreamt of this moment when he could get the chance to kiss Hannibal. It was better than he could have ever imagined. Hannibal's soft lips on his made him want to kiss him more, but he knew if he did he would never leave.

As Will pulled away, Hannibal whispered. "Ti amo, tesoro mio."

Will placed his lips on Hannibal's one last time, wishing he had all the time in the world to continue kissing the one he loved. "I love you, Hannibal." Will said after removing his lips.

Without any other words, Will quickly got back into the water and grabbed the little bottle before swimming away. He did not turn back to see Hannibal's devastated face or the confusion on Alana's.

Will held on tightly to the little bottle as he swam all the way back to Primavera.

Our first kiss was a goodbye, Will thought, knowing his heart was slowly breaking.

Chapter End Notes

This no lie got me tearing up a bit writing this part
To make it more real of course I had to listen to a song that made me cry just so I could get as much emotion for this part
But don't worry - the story is not done yet 🥲

Also:

"Ti amo, tesoro mio" - "I love you, my treasure"

Ventiotto

Chapter Summary

> So two more chapters after this one and the story is complete! Don't worry, I'm working on the last chapter and the two remaining chapters will be posted literally one by one after the last one is done so stay tuned for those updates!! 🥰🥰🥰🥰

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Why was he so surprised?

What did he think was going to happen?

It was clear enough what was going to happen thanks to the universe, but he had also made a promise. A promise that he knew would not be easy to break if he was even willing to sever it in the first place.

Hannibal had known that there was no way things were going to work out.

He placed a finger on his lips, missing the lips he had been waiting to kiss for so long. He had gotten that chance just for it to be a goodbye to Will. It was a cruel joke.

It was still dark by the time he made it back home. Chiyoh and his mother were in their own rooms which gave him the perfect opportunity to wash up and change his clothes. He would have to really wash them or just get rid of them. He did not want his mother or Chiyoh panicking.

When he exited his room, he spotted his mother and Chiyoh sitting down at their little table.

Simonetta rose from her seat. "Figlio, where did you go? We were worried but Chiyoh said you-"

"I'm fine, I promise. There was just something I needed to do, Mama." Hannibal said reassuringly, not wanting to male his mother panic.

Chiyoh crossed her arms. "Where's Will?"

Hannibal was quiet for a moment before replying. "He uhm...he went back to Portofino."

Simonetta frowned. "Oh...I'm sorry, figlio. I wish he could have stayed longer. He left right after being introduced to Bedelia."

"Maybe he'll come back to visit some other time." Chiyoh said hopefully.

Hannibal was not so sure about that. "Maybe. Sorry for disturbing you both. I think we should all head to bed. It's been an eventful day."

"Sí. Buonanotte, figlio." Simonetta said, walking towards her son and placing a kiss on his cheek. "Buonanotte Chiyoh."

Chiyoh nodded at her. "Buonanotte, signora." Once Simonetta was out of the room, Chiyoh got up from her own seat. "How was the conversation?"

Hannibal figured she would have had questions. All he could think about was how the whole night played out. "He wasn't happy, but we did *talk*." There was the whole killing a merman thing he had to leave out. "He left...giving me a kiss goodbye."

Chiyoh's eyes turned sorrowful. "I'm so sorry, Hannibal. I was hoping something."

"I don't know if anything was possible, Chiyoh." Hannibal frowned, moving a bit of his hair out of his face. "Some things are just not meant to be."

Chiyoh approached him. "Maybe, but I still wished for it. You two seemed so happy together. I'm still hopeful, Hannibal."

Hannibal smiled at her sadly. "Buonanotte Chiyoh."

"Buonanotte Hannibal." Chiyoh said to him as he was the first one to leave the room.

Once he was back in his room, Hannibal headed to his little balcony in his room. He glanced at the direction of Castiglioncello. It would never be the same again without Will.

If only things were different, kept repeating in his head.

🐚 ***Hannigram*** 🐚

Agony. It was all he could feel.

There was only one emotion he could feel and the only emotion he had felt ever since returning back to Primavera.

No one had questioned or talked to him. They all believed he just wanted to be left alone. Everyone close to Will (including Margot and Bella) had been made aware of what had

happened. Will had offered the one he loved a chance to be with his under the sea, but it seemed like Will had been rejected since he had returned home all alone.

If anyone wanted to try and talk to Will, no one did. He would tell them he just wanted to be left alone for now.

All Will did was sob. He would cry himself to sleep and he would dream of the life he could have had. Everyone could see he was not eating much since he never left his room. All he would do is look at his collection and cry himself to sleep.

Near his bed was the little potion bottle. He would just stare at it and he could hear all different voices in his head.

Thank goodness you didn't tell him - so he wouldn't have to see how pathetic you are.

Why did you not tell him? Just because he has a life up there doesn't mean he wouldn't want to have one with you!

He would be ashamed to have you as a life mate with how weak you're acting.

You made a mistake not telling him. He should have gotten the chance to decide.

He doesn't love you.

He loves you.

The voices became too much and he knew it was all the doubt in his heart. Sometimes, he regretted it and other times, he knew it was what he had to do. Everyone thought Hannibal had rejected him, but the human had never even gotten the option to accept or reject. Will did not give it to him which no one knew, of course.

If he had told him, what would he have said? Will did wonder that.

He knew if Hannibal did reject, he would have done so in a kind way. There would be no rudeness in his voice because Hannibal hated rude people and did not consider himself rude or stooping down that low.

Will could not consider the possibility that Hannibal would have accepted. It would just break his heart.

Then again, he did not give Hannibal a choice.

"Will?" He looked up from the bottle he was now holding his hands. It was Beverly. "I wanted to come check on you."

Will sniffled. "Let me just save your breath, Beverly, I am not fine. I feel broken all inside like...like every piece of me is shattered into pieces...and there's no way of putting it all back together."

Beverly swam towards Will and sat down next to him, wrapping an arm around his shoulder. "I know it's hard right now, Will. We all understand that..."

"It's...it's so much more than that what you're thinking..." Will hung his head as he began sobbing.

Beverly pulled him close as her friend began crying. It was hard seeing her friend in such a state. No one wanted to upset Will so when he said he needed to be alone they left him alone.

They all wished there was something they could do.

Beverly glanced at Will and stared at his hands where she could see he was holding something. Was it one of his human objects gifted by Hannibal? When Will's hand moved, she saw a little bottle of glowing blue liquid.

Alana had told them all. It was the potion that would have turned Hannibal into a mer.

It would make sense for seeing the bottle would make Will cry. If he had rejected Will, the bottle would only be a reminder to him that Hannibal did not want to be a part of his world.

"Will, I think you should let *this* go." Beverly advised, bringing her hand to Will's, hoping he would loosen his grip on the bottle.

Will cried a bit harder. "You don't get it, Beverly..."

Beverly tilted her head. "What do you mean, Will?"

"I couldn't make him choose..." Will sniffled, looking down at the bottle. "I love him with all my heart...making him choose would make me look bad. It'd break his heart..."

Beverly pieced everything together. "You didn't tell him. Will, you should have! He needed to know. He deserved to know he could have had a life with you. As a mer."

Will shook his head. "He loves his life up there. He has so much. He has his family there too...why would I make him choose between that and me?"

"Because you're an amazing mer, Will. He would be lucky to have you. He didn't even know he could have had you in a different situation." Will glanced at her but then looked away. She removed her arms and placed her hands on his arms to make him look at her. "Will, you sacrificed everything for him. You'd do it again without hesitation too. I think there's a possibility he would have done the same too."

"I'm scared, Beverly...I also didn't tell him because I was worried he'd reject the offer...at least he'd get to stay up there with his family and not have to decide..." Will had thought it would have been less painful, but nothing had been painless since he returned home.

"If he truly loves you, Will, he will decide to be with you." Beverly promised. She pulled Will into a hug as her friend began crying again.

Something needed to be done.

🐚 *Hannigram* 🐚

"I thank you, my Queens, for giving me the chance to be Magic Keeper." Katherine said as she bowed her head at Margot and Alana.

Margot smiled at the older mermaid. "Of course, Katherine. Don't give us reason to take the title away, but Alana and I think it'll be fine."

Katherine smiled at the queens before swimming down the hall to where her room was.

Margot and Alana were not expecting anyone else to come into the room, but then Beverly came swimming quickly into the room. This was most definitely unexpected.

"Beverly?" Margot called out.

Beverly moved a strand from her face. "It's about Will."

Alana rose from her throne, seconds away from swimming to Jack and Bella's. "What's wrong? Is he okay?"

Beverly simply raised her arm to show the little bottle in her hand. "This is potion that was supposed to make Hannibal into a merman, right?"

Alana nodded. "Yes. However, he rejected the offer. Will come back in tears and since Hannibal was not with him..."

"To be rejected by someone you love. I can't even imagine the pain Will must be enduring." Margot said sympathetically.

Beverly chimed in. "That's just it. Will didn't give Hannibal the option. He didn't let him know of the potion's existence."

"What?" Alana was not expecting that.

Margot looked at Alana and then at Beverly. "Why didn't he tell Hannibal?"

"Will didn't want him to choose between the life he had on land and a life with him. He was also afraid of Hannibal rejecting him too. Not telling him made things easier apparently." Beverly explained.

Alana sat back down on her throne, releasing a deep sigh. "Here we all thought he had been rejected..."

"It's not like he told us. It was wrong of us to assume." Margot said to her wife.

Beverly looked at the queens. "So...what now?"

"Hannibal didn't even know that there was another way he could be with Will. It's up to him in the end. He will have to let go of the life he has now in order to be with Will." Alana said.

Margot turned to her wife. "What do you think he'd decide?"

Alana got out of her throne and extended her hand for Beverly to give her the bottle. "Only one way of finding out."

Chapter End Notes

Alana is really just trying to be a good friend
Hope you enjoyed the update 💙💙💙💙💙

Ventinove

Chapter Summary

Like promised the last two chapters are being released now 💙💙💙

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

There would have never been a reason for her to step food on the land of the humans, until now. She would have never taken a potion to give her legs unless it was important.

Alana wobbled slightly as she stood on the beach. With the help of another potion, her red scales had come together to form her body like a dress. She looked like a regular human even though she imagined they did not wander around barefoot. What was she supposed to know?

She was a mermaid parading as a human.

Alana had promised to always be there for Will and she knew he would always be there for her. She realized now how wrong she had been. Arrange Will to be with another merman? A merman she barely knew? Alana felt guilty for the whole Matthew mess. Sure, Margot agreed with the idea but Alana had been the one to come up with the idea.

All *because Matthew said was pretty*, Alana shook her head in disbelief. She had been foolish.

Her friend loved a human. It was not something easy to register. Will just having Hannibal as a friend had been hard enough.

When Matthew offered him a chance to see Hannibal, Will had taken it. It was without doubt a reckless thing, but he did it. "*Love makes you do stupid things sometimes"* she believed her mother had once told her when she was younger. Will was just thinking of reuniting with Hannibal after being forbidden to ever see him again.

Alana could not imagine if someone had forbid her from seeing Margot, the love of her life.

They had done that to Will.

Of course, Alana thought Will was crazy. Crazy for having a human friend. Crazy for wanting to go back to said human friend. Crazy for trusting a human in the first place.

She knew she had hurt her friend.

Now, she planned to make it all better. Before they had gone to bring back Will, she had promised to make things right. This was her doing that.

Unfortunately for her, she did not know where Will's life mate was. She did know his name and that was good enough. Alana walked away from the beach, determination in every step she took.

Once she was off the beach, she turned to the left and then the right. She knew what Hannibal looked like too which she believed would be helpful. She was no expert when it came to blending in with the humans. She never had the desire or curiosity when it came to the human world. Will had though.

She was walking around until someone placed a hand on her shoulder.

"Signora? Are you lost?" It was red-haired woman. Alana wondered for a moment if she could assist her.

"Hello, I'm looking for a Hannibal Lecter." Alana replied.

The woman stared at her in confusion as if she was trying to see if she remembered that name at all.

"Hannibal Lecter?" Alana and the woman helping her turned to see another woman but with dark hair. She approached Alana. "Are you another friend of Hannibal's he's kept to himself?"

Alana did not understand what the woman was referring to, so she ignored it. "I'm a friend of *Will's*. I need to talk to Hannibal about something."

Hearing Will's name had done it. The woman looked shocked to hear Will's name but relieved. "Is Will okay? Hannibal said that he left."

"He's fine." *Brokenhearted if anything*, Alana kept to herself. "I must speak to Hannibal though."

The woman nodded. "Of course. I'm Chiyoh, a friend of Hannibal's." Chiyoh thanked the other woman before leading Alana away from the little booth. "How long have you known Will?"

Alana chuckled. "For most of my life actually. Our parents knew each other well. We're also neighbors."

"Is your family a part of the fishing business like Will?" Chiyoh questioned.

There was most definitely a bigger part of the story than Alana knew, but all she could do was smile and nod at Chiyoh. Everyone here was a stranger to her. Even Hannibal, the love of Will's life, was a mystery to her.

"Yes..." Alana simply replied.

Chiyoh was silent for a moment before she thought of something else to bring up. "Do you know that they're in love with each other?"

Alana nodded. "Yes, I'm well aware of that."

"I didn't get to know Will for long, but I'm happy he's the one Hannibal yearns for. Will knew a lot about Hannibal - things he shares with no one. They've both seen each other for who they are. It's not hard to see the love between them. I wish things were different for them." Chiyoh said.

I hope things will be made differently for them today, Alana thought. She would never say it because she did not know how much Chiyoh knew of the whole circumstance. There was no point in making her confused.

"So do I."

It was a little longer until Chiyoh had led her towards a type of home. She placed something in a little slit before opening a door to let them in.

"Hannibal?" Chiyoh called out once they were inside.

Alana looked around the place, but she tried to not distract herself. She kept her focus on why she was here and the little bottle in her hand. She was glad Chiyoh had not noticed.

As if on cue, a man entered the room. One of the first things Alana noticed about him were the maroon eyes. He was an attractive human with his silver blonde hair, lightly tanned skin and well-built body. She could see a reason why Will would love the human. She knows there was more to their relationship though.

"Buona sera, signora." Hannibal greeted her with a smile and he extended his hand.

Alana was not familiar with the greeting, but she was more intrigued by the exhaustion she could see on Hannibal's face. He had dark circles under his eyes (even though they were a bit light) and she could see a glint of sadness in those maroon eyes that he probably kept masked thanks to a happy smile.

"Hello Hannibal. My name is Alana. I'm a friend of Will's." Like that, Hannibal's smile disappeard. She had been anticipating that reaction. "May we speak in private?"

It took Hannibal a moment to respond. "Of course, follow me." Alana followed the man into another room. She could see there were chairs in there which Hannibal sat in one. "You can sit."

Alana shook her head. "I plan on being quick." She placed the bottle on top of a table in front of the chairs. "Did Will tell you how he got human legs?"

Hannibal gulped. "He said it was the help of a Magic Keeper. He gave him a potion and that potion granted him human legs."

"That's true. You see, there are only three things magic can't do. It can't make you the most powerful being in the world, it can't make someone fall in love with another and...it can't bring back someone who has passed. It can do *other* things though."

Hannibal grinned. "Like giving a merman legs."

"It can do more than that. The one Will took gave him legs." Alana said. She pointed at the bottle. "This one gives a human a mer tail."

There was just silence.

Alana was aware that it would take Hannibal a few moments to register her words in his head. This whole magic thing had to be something he needed to get used to.

"That's possible...?"

"Yes, it is." Alana answered. She took a a closer, causing him to look up at her. "I gave this to Will after you killed Matthew. I told him that the both of you could be together this way. Both of you as mers."

Hannibal frowned, taking the bottle of glowing blue liquid. He held it like one would hold a precious gem. "Why didn't he tell me?"

"He truly loves you. He didn't want you to decide between the life you have here and a life with him. You'd have to give up everything you have here...for him." It did sound like a lot. Alana would never have to make that choice, but she did not doubt it was something that would take time to think about.

Hannibal whispered. "All for him."

Alana approached him. "Think about it. He did get legs to be with you. He was fine with giving up everything for you without ever feeling resentment for having to let go of that life. If you choose to be with him, I'd hope you'd never resent him."

"I could never hate Will." Hannibal promised.

"Same. So you need to think about this. Don't take too long thinking about it either. If you reject, take the bottle to the ocean and drop it. I would have for the possibility that someone else might accidentally get their hands on that."

Hannibal agreed. "Very well."

Alana would have said see you later, but she did not know if she would. She simply nodded at him before exiting the room.

Tomorrow, they would all see.

One little bottle could do so much - who would have thought? Then again, it had happened with Will. He had taken a potion and it changed his whole world. It changed Hannibal's world just as much.

He should not have excluded the existence of magic when he had been friends with a merman for years now. Of course magic existed. He had a little bottle of it in his hand. It would change his and Will's life.

The blue liquid nearly reminded him of Will's eyes. The eyes he missed looking into.

He would get the chance to look into those eyes forever if he accepted the potion. Those lips he got to kiss only twice, he would get to kiss them for the rest of his life. He would get to embrace Will as much as he wanted.

Will and he could be together.

Of course, there was a catch to it.

Goodbye to his life as a human.

Goodbye to being a psychiatrist.

Goodbye to being a human.

Goodbye to his mother and Chiyoh.

There were many things he would have to bid farewell too. Was he ready to let all that go?

Mers would not want him to have any contact with anyone from the human world. It was already bad enough that Will had let Hannibal in on the secret that merfolk existed. He understood why he would have to let go of everything he had.

He would not just leave randomly. He would make sure to write letters to those he loved. He would let them know he was happy, safe and with the one he loved.

Was he ready to give that up?

All it took was a little seashell on the table. It was one of the ones Will had gifted him. He picked it up and it was like the memories played like a movie in his mind.

The first time they met.

Will gasped and was about to submerge into water when Hannibal spoke. "Wait! I'm not going to hurt you." Will had emerged most of his body back in the water, but he stayed.

They had been so young. So innocent too. They would have never considered the possibility that things would be different in the future and that they would make decisions that would change their lives forever.

Neither expecting they would have to choose one life they knew and one completely new to them.

Then the first time they had opened up to each other about something deep and personal.

Will snapped out of his thoughts when Hannibal found the strength to continue. "I wish she'd just wake up. I wish she'd see how much I need her."

The mer placed a hand on Hannibal's. "I'm sorry she sent you away. You love your uncle and aunt, but it's not the same. Her own grief has taken over and she can't see how in a way she's hurting you." Will lost both his parents, so he could not entirely relate to Hannibal's struggle, but he could see the pain in his friend's eyes.

Hannibal never talked about his father or Mischa to anyone. Will had been patient and he even told Hannibal about the loss of his parents. It had definitely made their friendship stronger.

His father and Mischa would have liked Will and he would have liked them too.

Too bad they were not here, but he had accepted it long ago.

Then there were the many times they had tried getting even closer, nearly kissing.

"I'll have to agree with her." Hannibal moved an inch closer, his hand extending towards Will to place a dark curl behind Will's ear. "Your cerulean eyes and wild curls are gorgeous."

Hannibal moved his face closer to Will's. Will stayed in place and closed his eyes awaiting for Hannibal's lips.

There more times after that and the moment they had actually finally kissed it was a goodbye. It had been the most wonderful kiss Hannibal would ever expeience. He wished to experience more, but Will had left.

Will was not gone though. It did not have to be a goodbye either. It could be a hello to a whole new chapter in his life. If he wanted it to be, of course.

In the end it was all up to him.

Alana had been right. Will had sacrificed evening just for him. So why not do the same?

Hannibal loved Will, he knew this. If he lived in a perfect world, he would be with Will. The world was not perfect, but it did have its miracles and this was one of them.

He had made his choice.

Hannibal exited the room to head into his room to grab a pen, paper and some envelopes. He made sure to label each envelope before he began writing on the papers.

Once he was finished writing the letters, he placed them in their envelopes and waited. All he could do was wait.

It all had played out as it normally would. He would eat dinner with his mother and Chiyoh. The two women usually drank tea together while Hannibal retired to his room. It was unlike any other night.

"Are you okay, Hannibal?" Chiyoh had asked.

Hannibal looked up and smiled at the woman he considered as a cousin. "Yes, Chiyoh. I'm fine." He was excited and nervous at the same time.

This would be his last night with his family. When he went to sleep, he made sure to kiss the top of both their heads.

Sleep was hard to obtain when all he could think about was tomorrow morning when everything would change.

Morning came soon enough and when it did, he found a note from Chiyoh. His mother and she were out at the marketplace shopping. It made it perfect for what he was about to do. He headed to the post so Bedelia can get his letter as soon as possible. Afterwards, he made it back home.

Hannibal approached the table where his mother and Chiyoh always sat to drink tea. He placed their envelopes in front of each seat and then, he went inside to grab the little bottle and headed to Castiglioncello.

🐚 ***Hannigram*** 🐚

Hannibal eyed the beautiful ocean that was staring right back at him. He had been heading to this same beach for years. It had become somewhere he considered a safe space for him. He would always see Will here and in a way, it almost felt like a home because Will was always there.

It all seemed so different now.

Just yesterday, he had killed a merman on this beach. He was now a murderer, but he supposed it was the only thing that could have been done.

No longer would he come back to Castiglioncello to just see Will. If he would come back to Castiglioncello it would just be to see the surface. To see the world he once lived in, but he would not be allowed to walk freely amongst this world again.

It would be fine though.

Whether on land or in the sea, Hannibal just wanted to be with Will. He had been given this chance to be with the one he loved.

Hannibal removed his socks and shoes. No matter what his tail (it was odd thinking that now for him) would cause his trousers to rip. He removed his shirt and took the little bottle and held it as he walked closer into the water, his feet and ankles getting wet.

He'd do it all for Will.

Hannibal turned one last time to look in the direction he came before glancing at the ocean. He removed the lid from the bottle and brought it to his lips, draining the liquid from it.

He was unsure how it was all supposed to feel, but it felt like his legs were on fire. His very own biology was changing before him and it was intriguing yet a bit intimidating at the same time.

Hannibal moved closer into the water so his head would be fully submerged. He took a deep breath as he could still feel the burning pain in his legs. It was only a few moments after when he looked down to see his legs were gone. Replacing his legs was a deep maroon tail. He eyed his arms and could see scales of the similar shade trailing down his arms.

One other thing he noticed was that he was not alone.

In front of him was the one he loved. Will was there watching him, his blue tail gently going back and forth in the water.

Will had been waiting for him.

"Will..." Hannibal opened his mouth. He thought it was weird that he did not need to his hold his breath underwater and that he could just talk as if he were having a conversation with someone above water.

Will smiled at him. He swam towards him, placing his hands on Hannibal's face. "You came."

"I chose you, Will." Hannibal stated.

Will suddenly looked sad. "I didn't want to make you choose. I didn't want you to resent me for making you do that."

Hannibal did not need to hear Will's explanation. It did not matter to him. "It's fine, Will. You did it because you love me. I would have never wanted to make you choose either."

"Are you really sure...you want this life?" Will asked.

Hannibal chuckled, placing his hands over Will's. "Amore, I'm here with you, aren't I? I love you, Will. It is hard letting go of all I had, but if it's to be with you then so be it. All I've ever wanted was you."

Will wrapped his arms around Hannibal's neck and just embraced him. Hannibal embraced him back, now knowing that they would never have to say goodbye to each other.

They could be together finally.

When Will pulled away for a bit, Hannibal locked their lips together.

There would be no kiss goodbye. They could spend the rest of their lives just being together.

Will was the first one to pull away. "I love you, Hannibal."

"I love you too, Will." Hannibal replied.

🐚 ***Hannigram*** 🐚

Dear Mama,

You once told me that when two people who truly love each other will always be together even though it may not seem like it. Sometimes, things happen and unfortunately it cannot be undone which makes it an unfortunate tragedy. Someone took the person you were meant to be with from you. Although Papa is gone, he is always with you. Mischa and he are within our hearts and memories and that is how they live on with us. I thought I would be in the same situation where I would never get to be with the one I truly love. However, a fortunate event happened that will allow me to be with the one who has stolen my heart.

I know Papa wanted me to marry Bedelia and I know that you would have preferred me to marry her too. I wanted to, but only because I thought there was no other choice and it was something Papa had wanted. I see now that I would not be happy. I cannot love someone when someone else has already stolen my heart. I cannot be with another when I have been in

love with someone else for a very long time. I have written Bedelia a letter to break off the engagement. Please forgive me, Mama, but I must do this.

I want you to know, Mama, that I am happy, safe, but most importantly with the one I love. I know you have always wanted me to be happy and I know you'll be happy to know that I am. I am with the one I love and we have ran off together to roam this world together. I wish I could have said this to you, but it would have broken my heart and I would not have left. I need to do this though. I must be with the one I love.

I love you too, Mama. Thank you for being a wonderful mother. I know things were hard for you after that tragedy and I understand how much it broke your heart. I don't hate you for sending me away and I was never away for long since I'd return to you every summer. Even though I'm not there with you, I'll always be with you within your heart and in your memories. Ti amo, Mama.

Ciao, Hannibal

Simonetta held the letter in her hand, her eyes going over it repeatedly. There was a smile on her face though. She held the letter tightly so it would not slip from her hands. She exhaled deeply as she closed her eyes hoping her son would be safe wherever he had ran off to.

Chiyoh was right behind her reading the letter Hannibal had left her. "He ran off...with the one he truly loves. Too bad we didn't get the meet who the lucky person was." Chiyoh knew of course, but it had never been addressed in front of Simonetta.

Simonetta chuckled, turning to look at Chiyoh. "I think we have." She gently folded the letter. "I'm happy he's happy, Chiyoh."

"Even though he didn't marry Bedelia?" Chiyoh knew it had been something Count Lecter had arranged with his friend.

"Yes, Chiyoh. He found someone he loves and that makes me happy. I know they'll be happy together." Simonetta said as she sat down at the table. "I'll miss him, but I want him to be happy. It's all that matters."

Chiyoh smiled. "I want the same for him, signora." She folded her own letter and placed it in her pocket. She grabbed the teapot and poured some tea for him.

They're together now, Chiyoh thought with a big smile.

Chapter End Notes

Hope you enjoyed!!
Alana was being a good friend not giving up on the love Hannigram has

Also our dear couple finally got to be together this time under the sea instead of on land!!!!

One more chapter 🥰

Trenta

Chapter Summary

We've reached our stop my dear readers 🥲 here ya go 💙💙💙

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

"He's so cute!" Beverly exclaimed as she looked at the male mer baby was wrapped up in a bundle of seaweed. She could not deny it when a kid was cute. She had done the exact same thing after Hannibal and Will had their little ones.

Margot chuckled. "Isn't he? I still can't believe that it was just last week that he was brought in the world."

"I bet Alana was exhausted right after." Beverly knew for certain that must have been stressful and tiring for the mermaid queen.

Speaking of the mermaid, Alana swam into the baby's nursery. "It was. Morgan was taking his sweet little time coming into the world."

"At least he's here." Beverly said with a sigh of relief.

Since her friends were all busy parents or newly mated like Jimmy and Brian, Beverly had spent her time doing something else. She still was not mated herself, but she was in no rush for any of it. She was happy for her friends and wished them the best, but she thought a change of scenery would be nice.

It was not unheard for mers to leave their kingdoms and see other kingdoms in the ocean. Primavera was not the only mer kingdom out there. She had visited a mer kingdom known as Dolarhyde which was run by the King Francis and Queen Reba. It had been quite the trip and she had returned back home because she had enough traveling at the moment.

Besides, she could not have arrived at a better time now that Prince Morgan was born.

"I still remember when Clarice was just this small." Jack said as he observed the baby prince with Bella by his side.

Jimmy chuckled. "Now Clarice is three. How about when Abigail was that small?"

"I still can't believe they're growing so fast." Brian said with a sad smile.

"Abigail is just six, Brian. Besides, I can't believe you two have barely mated. Why did it take you two so long?" Beverly could not believe her two friends.

Jimmy and Brian looked at each other, both trying to decide which one would explain it to Beverly.

"Honestly, we were just being patient." Brian informed Beverly.

Jimmy rolled his eyes. "And Brian's mother had a hard time letting go of her only child. My parents were glad when my brother mated and were happy to find out I already knew who my mate was."

Beverly just shook her head at the ridiculousness of the two, but she could see they would never change. "Hannibal and Will have two, Margot and Alana just had theirs, what about you two?" Beverly eyed Jimmy and Brian with crossed arms. She was always one to tease.

Brian was quiet for a moment. Jimmy was the one to answer to Beverly. "I don't know if even we're ready for kids yet, Beverly."

"Uh huh." Beverly said, turning to Jack and Bella. "How long do you think it'll be before they're parents?"

"I don't care when, to be honest. I'm still feeling a bit happy seeing all these children. Will wasn't extremely young when we took him in." Jack said with a wide grin.

Bella smiled. "It's sweet to see so many of them."

"It is just three little mers, Bella." Jack said.

"More than one." Bella leaned on Jack as she stared at little Morgan.

Beverly thought of the other little mers. "I'm guessing Abigail and Clarice have met the little prince already, haven't they?"

"They were so excited to meet him." Alana remembered Will telling her that his daughters had kept asking when they could see the prince of Primavera. Morgan would end up being a friend of Abigail and Clarice's for certain.

Margot cooed at little Morgan when he turned to her. "They got to hold him and wanted to stay, but they'll get more time to play with him as he keeps growing."

"They certainly will." Beverly agreed, taking a look around the room. It was nice seeing her family. Hannibal and Will's family were too, of course.

Beverly was happy to be home.

🐚 *Hannigram* 🐚

Two little mer girls were looking at all box full of stuff. There were little patches of seaweed scattered on the box. They knew there were objects inside. Their parents had told them that there were human items inside the box.

"What do you think is in there, Clarice?" The little mer girl with the long dark hair and a teal colored tail.

The other little mer girl had short brown hair that nearly touched her shoulders. Her tail was a lighter shade of red. "I don't know..."

Clarice sat and watched as her sister opened up the box so they could both take a peek at what was inside. There were a ton of objects in there that they could not name.

"Papa and Mama promised us they'd show us soon. Why not now?" The other little girl said with a little grin.

"Abigail! Clarice!"

Clarice turned around with worry on her face. "You don't think we'll get in trouble for looking?"

The other girl, Abigail, shrugged at her sister. "I don't think so. Besides, they're not going to know we were looking in here."

Abigail pulled out another smaller box and opened it. Inside were little silver hooks that had little colorful things attached to them.

"What are those?" Clarice asked.

"I don't know..." Abigail replied with just as much awe. She went back to the bigger box and took out a necklace that had a big blue stone. "Whoa."

"It's so pretty!" Clarice exclaimed with wide eyes.

Abigail handed Clarice the necklace and fetched something out of the box. It was a bunch a little thin colorful rectangles. "What are these?"

"They're called tarot cards, my dears." Abigail and Clarice gasped and turned around to see their father looking at them with amusement on his face. "You know, curiosity killed the fish, they say."

"We're not fish though, Papa." Abigail said in her defense.

Hannibal chuckled at his daughters' response. "You're right about that."

"What are you guys doing?" They turned to see Will swim into the room. He noticed Abigail and Clarice were near the box. "What are you two doing?"

Abigail took the smaller box and lifted it up. "Clarice and I wanted to see what's inside. Papa and you said we can see one day. Why not now?"

"They're as curious as you were." Hannibal grinned, turning to his husband. He could remember long ago when Will was just as curious about human stuff.

Will crossed his arms. "I was about ten at that time. Neither of them are even eight yet, Hannibal."

"Where did you get all these from?" Abigail asked, looking at the little colorful rectangles.

Hannibal and Will exchanged looks as they were debating in their heads whether or not now was the time to tell their daughters.

"It's a long story actually..." Will said.

Clarice's eyes lit up. "We want to know!"

"Yeah!" Abigail agreed with her sister. Both girls were looking at their parents, hopeful that they'll tell them the story.

Hannibal grinned. "I don't think you can say no to those faces, Will." He swam to closer to his daughters to sit with them on the floor.

His husband had been right. Will could not say no to his daughters he loved. "Fine." Abigail and Clarice triumphed as Will sat down with them. He picked up the box of the silver hooks in a box. "These are called fishing lures."

"Fishing lures?" Abigail repeated.

"Humans use them to fish. Many fishermen throughout the world use them all the time. They're all different too." Hannibal explained, taking one fishing lure out with a little fish on it. "See?"

Abigail took the fishing lure from her father, examing it closely. "Where did you get it from?"

Will glanced at Hannibal. "It was one of the first things your papa had given me when we had first met."

"Papa, where did you get fishing lures from?" Clarice asked as she took two out.

Hannibal placed a hand over Clarice's head, gently stroking her hair. "Well...I was not born a merman. Like how your mama was. Or how Abigail and you were born mers. I was once a

human, born to a human family."

Abigail and Clarice gasped. They had never met a human before and their own father was a former human!

"Really Papa?" Abigail asked.

Hannibal nodded. "Yes. I was just on the beach when I noticed someone from under the water was staring at me."

Clarice glanced to Will. "It was you, wasn't it, Mama?"

"I was just a child when I met your papa. Your aunts and uncles were *so* mad at me. They made me promise to never go back. I couldn't keep that promise though." Will answered.

Abigail still had her eyes on her father. "Then what happened, Papa?"

Hannibal continued his story. "He told me he was interested in fishing lures since there had been a mermaid who had all this human stuff and out of everything she had - it was the fishing lures he was intrigued by. So, I promised him I would get him a whole box of them if he wanted."

Will watched as Hannibal continued telling the story of how they met. Abigail and Clarice were surprised, confused and happy throughout it all. Hearing his daughters giggle and seeing his life mate's smile warmed his heart.

This was all he ever wanted with Hannibal.

And it was beautiful.

Chapter End Notes

So....

I am so happy right now!!! Actually kind of mixed feelings. I'm happy because I achieved my goal of finishing this story before the year ends! I thought I wasn't going to finish it and I did it. I'm proud of it too. I had come up with this idea weeks ago and I was debating on even working on it because I was trying to give my all to my other Hannigram story and luckily I was able to juggle between the two and able to complete them which is something I'm proud of myself for. I'm also sad because this journey has ended 🥲

Our dear Hannigram got their happy ending and they got to live as mers together. Now it is and isn't implied that there was mpreg. It wasn't really touched. I remember it had been mentioned in Undici in Will's POV and it's implied for this ending as well so you can take it however you want but as we see Hannigram are parents to Abi and Clarice 🥰🥰🥰🥰

Also Margot and Alana have their son too and Jimmy and Brian barely just mated which Beverly and probably none of us can understand why they took forever but oh well 🤣🤣🤣

I want to thank all of you who read, left comments and kudos for this fic. I'm happy to have been able to share it with you and I can't wait to share my next Hannigram story whenever it is ready *hopefully soon*, but until then I am wishing you all a Happy New Year's and once again thank you all 🐚🐚🐚🐚🐚🐚

Until the next Hannigram story💙💙💙💙💙💙💙💙💙

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